

# GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGNS & ADVOCACY

*a toolkit to help you make change happen*



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# *Acknowledgements*

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The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights is a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States. The Leadership Conference works toward an America as good as its ideals.

The Leadership Conference Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization that builds public will for federal policies that promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States.

Access this material online at [http://www.civilrights.org/action\\_center/toolkit](http://www.civilrights.org/action_center/toolkit).

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Dear Friend:

This toolkit was created with you in mind. Its purpose is to educate, equip, encourage, and empower you to make change.

Our goal is to provide you with the basic structure and strategies needed to plan and carry out an effective grassroots public education or advocacy campaign. It's possible to write an entire book on each of the areas covered in this toolkit – in fact, many have been written. But you don't have to read half a dozen books to put together a strong campaign.

What you need to do is establish your goals, create a strategy, make a step-by-step plan, and mobilize the people, partners, and resources to make it all achievable. This toolkit is meant to be a concise guide to accomplishing that. And we include plenty of suggested resources if you want more in-depth information.

The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund provide leadership and coordination to coalition efforts and support the work of national and local partners by providing strategic and technical assistance, preparing materials, offering training, and identifying resources to support coalition efforts. Information on training for grassroots advocacy is provided by The Leadership Conference; information relating to education and coalition building is provided by The Education Fund.

We believe in the power of coalitions to bring people together for a common purpose. History shows that change can be made when diverse voices unite around a shared goal. We hope you will consider us your partners in making needed change happen. You can learn more about our work at [www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org). You can also reach The Leadership Conference field staff at 202-466-3315 or at [grassroots@civilrights.org](mailto:grassroots@civilrights.org).

Onward!



Ellen Buchman, Vice President, Field Operations  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
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## *MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN*

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This toolkit has been designed to give you both a big-picture approach to planning a public education or advocacy campaign and specific suggestions for putting your organizing and communication plans into action.

No matter how well you create a plan, or how well you execute it, you'll need to stay flexible. You may have to adjust your strategy if there's a major shift in the political climate you're working in. You may need to revise your work plan if you don't raise quite enough money to do everything you had wanted to do—or if you raise more than you expected. You may come up against unanticipated obstacles—or unanticipated allies who bring new perspectives and resources to the campaign. You may decide one part of your strategy isn't working so well and needs to be reconsidered. In other words, make adjustments and course corrections as needed, but keep your eye on your goal, and hold yourself and your campaign colleagues accountable to commitments you have made to each other.

Some campaigns will be like a sprint, with an intense focus on a short-term goal. But more often, changing public attitudes and public policies is a long-distance race that requires planning, training, stamina, and teamwork.

We encourage you to let us know whether this information is useful—and what other kinds of information you would like.

And we would love to hear and share success stories from your own campaigns. Get in touch with us at [grassroots@civilrights.org](mailto:grassroots@civilrights.org).

Make change happen!

The Leadership Conference  
The Leadership Conference Education Fund

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