



IOWA INTERFAITH **POWER & LIGHT**

Advocacy 101

There are many ways to be an effective advocate for climate policy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. Work your way up the Iowa IPL “Ladder of Engagement” to develop your skills and take concrete actions as a climate advocate.

1. Learn the basics about climate change and its impacts.
2. Share what you’ve learned with others in your faith community.
3. Form a “Green Team” in your congregation for education and action.
4. Send an email to your Member of Congress, telling them why you care about climate change as a person of faith.
5. Write a Letter to the Editor about the issue of climate change.
6. Generate an Op-Ed in your local newspaper on the issue of climate change.
7. Write a letter to your Member of Congress about climate change impacts.
8. Call your Member of Congress, or speak to their staff member who works with climate and energy policy.
9. Ask a question at your Member of Congress’ town hall meeting, or at a candidate appearance.
10. Meet face to face with your Member of Congress.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor, which are read by the general public as well as by elected officials, candidates for office, and their staff members, can be an effective way of moving public opinion on a subject. When constructing your letter, remember that it is best if you can write in response to an article or letter which was recently published. Be sure to reference the article in your letter. In addition, most newspapers will not publish a letter which is longer than 250 words, so be concise. Be sure to check the guidelines for your local paper, and include your contact information so they can confirm with you. If your letter is published, send a copy of the letter to your Members of Congress for even greater impact.

For a list of potential topics and sample LTEs, visit [Vote Climate US](#).

Op-eds

Op-eds are short essays that run opposite the editorial page in a newspaper. The op-ed page represents a diverse range of voices—from experts to everyday citizens—who bring a new perspective to a public issue. To get your op-ed published, you should identify an appropriate topic and be able to craft a strong argument.

Op-eds are typically 500-800 words in length. Your piece should be tied to something that readers are already talking and thinking about—an upcoming vote, decision, finding, or event. Your op-ed should do more than offer an opinion. Be prepared to defend your statement with facts and statistics.

Many newspapers provide instructions for writers looking to get their op-ed published. It may be beneficial to review these guidelines before starting the writing process.

For more op-ed tips, [click here](#). To read an op-ed written by Rev. Susan Hendershot Guy, Iowa IPL's Executive Director, [click here](#).