

10 Steps to Passing a CIR Resolution in Your City

Passing a local resolution on comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) is a powerful way to demonstrate the need for CIR, create a positive space for immigrants in our community, and send a positive message to our Washington Members of Congress that cities and counties across Washington are calling for them to take action on immigration reform in 2010. Resolutions will express the urgency of CIR and that our Members of Congress have the support they need to take leadership on this issue.

Here are ten steps to passing a CIR resolution in your city:

- 1) **Know the Issue:** Read through the information on comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) on OneAmerica's website. Come to a training on how to talk about CIR and answer tough questions at OneAmerica or invite us to your community to do a training. Ask a OneAmerica organizer for support getting started.
- 2) **Know What's Important in Your Community:** Brainstorm on why immigration reform matters to your community. How are immigrants important to your community (workforce, families, moral values)? Determine what message resonates most powerfully in your community.
- 3) **Know Your Opposition:** What arguments will the opposition raise? Who are they? How do you respond? What or who could neutralize them? Does your message (developed in step #2) need to change to address opposition?
- 4) **Know Your Councilmember:** How have they voted in the past on immigration or similar issues? Who do they listen to? Conduct a detailed power map (see template on website).
- 5) **Build a Coalition & Reach Out:** Have an informational meeting with interested groups in your county or city. Think broadly about different types of groups you could invite to a coalition meeting— faith members, educators and ESL teachers, immigrants, business leaders, law enforcement, public health, or progressive allies. If you do not already have a good working relationship with these types of groups or key community leaders spend time in these initial meetings coming up with a plan for visiting some of these stakeholders and inviting them to participate. Your first meeting is a time to create a base and brainstorm ways to grow the support for a resolution. Set a time to meet regularly.
- 6) **Establish a Grasstops Team:** "Grasstops" is a word used to describe people with connection to the grassroots as well as elected officials or government employees. Identify a Grasstops Team that can meet with people like the police chief, hospital administrators, and key business leaders. These people may be interested in coming to a coalition meeting but are more likely to be willing to weigh in at a key moment through testifying at a city council meeting or making a phone call to an elected official.
- 7) **Message:** Decide what messages make the most sense to move a CIR resolution in your city/county. Use the message consistently in meetings, press releases, on facebook or social media, and when speaking or reaching out to traditional media.
- 8) **Meet with Potential Champions:** Meet with an elected official who you think would be likely to introduce the resolution. Come prepared for the meeting with coalition members who represent

different points of view (faith, domestic violence, immigrant groups) and a packet of information including sample language and different cities that have already passed the resolution. After identify someone who will introduce the legislation meet with other elected officials as well.

- 9) Mobilize:** Follow up with legislator to see what you can do to support them. Discuss timeline. Use this time to continue to grow base. This might be a good time to collect signatures on a petition, make phone calls to legislators, or send letters to legislators. You may need to mobilize a large group to attend a city council meeting or prepare local community members and grass tops leaders to give testimony.
- 10) Endure and Persevere:** Don't give up. Try other routes when one path closes and put the pressure on. Consult your secondary targets and allies for help moving the resolution.
- 11) Win!** Now that you have influenced local policy remember to send a copy of your resolution to Washington's Congressional delegation so you will also impact federal legislation!