

Organizing an Interfaith Delegation

Raise the Minimum Wage



Interfaith Worker Justice invites you to organize an interfaith delegation to your representative in Congress. The delegation should focus on securing support or co-sponsorship for the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013.

Preparation

Arrange the Meeting

Ask for a meeting with the congressperson in his or her local office. Write a letter asking for a meeting to discuss the issue of the minimum wage with a delegation of faith leaders. One or more prominent religious leaders should sign the letter. Call the scheduler of the congressperson one week after sending the letter, if you don't receive a reply. Be persistent.

Hold a Pre-meeting

Arrange a time to meet for an hour and a half or so before the scheduled appointment. At the pre-meeting, clarify the purpose of the delegation's visit, select a facilitator, review the proposed agenda, and decide on roles (who will say what).

The Meeting

Opening:

Designate a delegate to open the meeting with prayer. (Be sensitive to interfaith representatives in the room.) Have the facilitator thank the member of Congress (or legislative aid) for his/her time and outline how the group would like the meeting to proceed.

Introductions:

Each person should introduce himself/herself. This is not a time to be humble! Give all relevant titles, community connections, and reasons why you could influence other constituents.

Issue Background:

Have a designated individual, who is confident about the issue, make the case for increasing and indexing the federal minimum wage. Be sure to review the materials available at www.iwj.org for talking points and rebuttals to common opponent arguments.

Support for Campaign:

The rest of the delegates should describe their concern with the current minimum wage rate of \$7.25 per hour, the tipped wage minimum wage rate of \$2.13 per hour, the need to increase and index it, and their religious traditions' teachings for the respect of human dignity.

Question to Member of Congress:

The meeting facilitator should ask the political leader where she/he stands on raising and indexing the federal minimum wage. Will she/he sponsor the bill? Will she/he recruit other supporters? Why or why not.

Member of Congress Response:

Sometimes the elected leader has questions. Answer them if you can. If not, promise to get back to him/her with answers. Often the official says she/he wants to study the issue and campaign. Although that is fine, ask when you can follow up to find out what the leader's decision is. Sometimes the leader agrees.

Closing:

Thank the elected leader for the meeting. Confirm the next steps (such as that you will get back with information to answer a particular question). Close with prayer.

Do you know who your members of Congress are? To find your Senator or Representative call 1-888-868-3762, or go to www.congress.org/congressorg/officials/congress.