

Tabling 101

What We Are

Citizens' Climate Lobby is a non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change. Core values guide our staff and volunteers along the way.

Focus

We are focused on what we see as the single most impactful solution to climate change—a national carbon fee and dividend program. We know it will not solve the problem entirely and appreciate the work that our friends in other groups are doing. So that we can be effective, we do not let ourselves get distracted by work that does not support our core purpose.

Core Values:

Optimism

We believe that people are good, and that democracy works. We are confident that our approach will work because we see progress. We stand for a solution, not in protest of other solutions. We don't expect perfection from ourselves or others; this is a process and we know that people can improve. Together, we are a community that offers one another comfort, support, and fun as we work.

Relationships

We take the most generous approach to other people as possible — appreciation, gratitude, and respect. We listen, we work to find common values, and we endeavor to understand our own biases. We are honest and firm. We know that there is a place for protest, but our approach is to build consensus — that's what will bring enduring change. That's why elected officials and their staff, no matter what their politics, say they are happy to see us — and mean it.

Integrity

We are prepared and do our research. We are always on time for meetings. Our approach is thoughtful & thorough. We consult experts and use data. We are open to new information; in fact we solicit opposing opinions. We refine our solutions to make them better. We follow up when we are asked. We keep on.

Personal Power

We use our voices to be heard. This simple act transforms us from spectators to engaged citizens, and it reveals the true nature of democracy to us. We are volunteer-driven — trusting volunteers to make important decisions, and to create and develop things that will be valued by Citizens' Climate Lobby.

Non-Partisan

Our group is open to all who are serious about solving climate change. You are welcome no matter where you live, what you wear, what you do for a living, or who you voted for in the last election. We work with elected officials and community leaders from across the political spectrum because we believe that everyone is a potential ally.

Why We Table at Events

It's one of the best ways to recruit new members, educate and encourage people to take action. It's a good way for CCL volunteers to quickly develop their lobbying skills.

Effective tabling requires the same verbal communication skills needed to lobby politicians or speak with editorial boards. IT'S A CONVERSATION. You learn how to quickly establish a personal connection with strangers...how to communicate precisely about important concepts...how to ask good questions...and, most importantly, how to listen. You find out what works best for you.

Educating our fellow citizens is empowering. You will inspire others by your example. And, it encourages people

to get involved—to take that first “action”—by sending a postcard, writing a short letter to Congress, attend a CCL meeting.

Prepare for the Event

Understand the event and who your audience might be. Think about your conversation starter. Remember, someone who slows down or stops is signaling an interest. Ask some friendly questions about themselves. “What brings you here today? “Where are you from?” “Are you worried about the climate change?” **GET THEM TALKING! LISTEN!**

If you sense the person doesn’t have much time, you may find it more appropriate to just start with “Have you heard about Citizens’ Climate Lobby?” It will depend on the situation and the personality of the person you are interacting with. Tune in to their body language and go with what you think will be most effective.

Practice laser talks, the one liners and your delivery before the event; learn how to make the laser talks sound conversational. Practice with a friend beforehand.

Sample Conversation

Note: the following is a suggestion; please do or say whatever’s necessary to sound conversational.

1. Open: *“Hi! I’m [YOUR NAME]. I’m a volunteer with the [YOUR CITY] chapter of Citizens’ Climate Lobby. Thanks for being out here to celebrate (EVENT). May I speak with you for a minute?” Or, “What brought you out here today?” “Is climate change one of your concerns?” “Nice hat!”*
2. Let them respond, LISTEN and acknowledge.
3. Tell them what we’re doing: *“Are you interested in hearing a little bit about our solution for climate change? Would you like to hear what Citizens’ Climate Lobby is doing to create political will?” Or, “Can I tell you about*

what we’re doing?” Or, “Can I tell you a little bit about Citizens’ Climate Lobby?”

Practice this CCL Laser Talk: (share a few stats from the last page of this document)

- CCL is an international, non-partisan, grassroots organization committed to creating the political will for a stable climate. We strive to create that political will by empowering people to exercise their citizenship to its maximum extent.
- In the United States we have chapters in all of the 50 states. Additionally, we have international chapters in 10 countries.
- We are also truly grassroots, with only 25 full-time staff and an ever growing network of volunteers.
- Combined, these volunteers have been published an average of 12 letters to the editor EACH DAY in 2018. These letters to the editor are only a piece of our efforts to generate political will. We meet directly with congressional offices (1,409 meetings in 2018) **and** engage with editorial boards and community leaders to gain their support for our proposal.

4. What we’re for:

Practice this laser-talk:

Our carbon fee and dividend proposal works like this:

- A fee is placed on carbon-based fuels at the source (well, mine, port of entry).
- This fee starts at \$15 per ton of CO₂ emitted, and increases steadily each year by \$10 so that clean energy is cheaper than fossil fuels within a decade.
- All of the money collected is returned to American households on an equitable basis.
- Under this plan about 60% of all households would break even or receive more in their dividend checks than they would pay in higher prices due to the fee,

thereby protecting the poor and middle class.

- A predictably increasing carbon price will send a clear market signal which will unleash entrepreneurs and investors in the new clean-energy economy.

5. Close: (make it your own based on the situation): *“Would you like to join us for an introductory call Wednesday night?”*
“Would you like to send a postcard to your member of Congress today?” *“What questions do you have about this policy?”*
“Have you ever lobbied your member of Congress?”

Suggested Messaging

Try to keep Citizens’ Climate Lobby’s values, purposes and method in mind when speaking with others.

CCL Purpose:

- To create the political will for a sustainable climate.
- To empower individuals to have breakthroughs in exercising their personal and political power.

CCL Method:

- CCL takes the view that politicians generally do not create political will, rather they respond to it. CCL employs a relationship model for citizens to create political will that has proven to be successful in the by the organization RESULTS.
- CCL is a non-partisan organization. People of all political affiliations are welcome. By joining CCL you will work with people who are for something: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, not against something.

What should we avoid? What should we do?

- Avoid sitting at your booth in deep conversation with your partners or on a cell phone, laptop, or tablet – attendees will not want to interrupt you. Stand in front of the table but off to the side so when you are engaged in conversation with prospective CCLers, passersby can still see the display and materials.

- If you are planning to ask people to fill out Constituent Comment forms, try to arrange for a place for them to sit and write off to the side of the display table.
- If you find that the display set-up is not working for you and minor adjustments will improve your effectiveness, rearrange to best meet your objectives.
- Use humor when appropriate—it helps people relax and encourages engagement. An example when there are many organizations tabling at an event: “You don’t want to miss THIS table.”
- Avoid turning off some people by raising “hot button” issues (like Keystone XL or nuclear power) – it is best to stay neutral on these issues and keep on point. Do say we are for pricing carbon/GHG emissions, not against KXL or nuclear power. The economists tell us that once you get the price right the free market will determine the optimal mix of resources, and that the sources with the highest life-cycle emissions will no longer be economically viable. We are for something, not against things like KXL, EPA regulations, etc.
- Avoid lecturing or regurgitating the laser talks. Do speak conversationally and listen very carefully.
- Avoid overusing dire warnings of climate doom. Do couple dire messages with a solution...ALWAYS.
- Avoid making or responding negatively to derogatory or inflammatory comments; that’s not a good way to inspire others. Do be respectful and mention your member of Congress by name; that’s motivating.

Preaching to the Choir

CCL’s niche is grassroots mobilization to create political will at the federal level for a carbon fee and dividend policy. We are creating political will and there is very little overlap with the work we do and what others are doing.

Be complementary of other organizations and their work. It's possible that while volunteering you'll be a small fish in a big pond competing for people's attention, **do so in a respectful way.**

Handling pushback from like-minded people

- The cynical type: people who are dismissively cynical. After explaining a revenue-neutral carbon tax policy, these are the people who'll often say "there's no way a revenue-neutral carbon tax will make it through Congress."
 - Don't get defensive or dismiss them.
 - Acknowledge their frustration.
 - Tell them that's how you felt before you joined CCL.
 - Tell them you now see things differently.
 - Tell them how the conversation in DC, has changed because of the work we're doing.
 - Turn their frustration into empowerment.
- The territorial type: people who believe that a CF&D or revenue-neutral carbon tax (RNCT) compromises their efforts.
 - CCL's policy is not a replacement for what others are doing, it complements their efforts.
 - Economists and scientists tell us CF&D or RNCT is the best first step.

Some Key Facts about CCL:

- More than 170,000 supporters in our network
- Supporters in nearly every Congressional District
- 568 Chapters, 466 in the United States
- 1,409 Citizen-led Lobby Meetings
- 62,538 Letters to Members of Congress
- 4,290 Op-Eds, Editorials, Letters to Editors
- 3,171 Speaking and Tabling Events

Recent Successes:

- Successfully worked with Congress to introduce (H.R. 763) **The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019**. CCL supports this bill, and is working towards its re-introduction in the Senate, and its passage through Congress.
- Instrumental in establishing the **House Climate Solutions Caucus**, a bipartisan group in the US House of Representatives which will explore policy options that address the impacts, causes, and challenges of our changing climate.
- Partnered with California state legislature to pass a resolution calling on the federal government to enact Carbon Fee and Dividend nationwide.

For more information:

CCL Community Tabling Training

<https://community.citizensclimate.org/resources/item/19/290>



CCL Community website resources

<https://community.citizensclimate.org/resources>



Local resources in Madison area

<http://www.madisonccl.info/presentations-and-tableing.html>



Local contacts

- For tabling events and materials
Bruce Beck
50 Cherokee Cir., #104
Madison, WI 53704
bdbeck@charter.net
608-977-0453 (cell)
- For tabling materials and electronics
Linda Farmer
2810 Curry Parkway #12
Madison, 53713
lindafarmerccl@gmail.com
608-577-8507

January 2020