

# **The Call to Prevent Nuclear War**

## **How to Guide for Contacting Elected Officials**

### **Who Are You Targeting?**

Start by giving some thought to who represents you at the local level and what the governing structure/legislative body of your city/town/county is. Many small towns, for example have select boards or town meetings that allow “warrant articles” to be submitted and voted on.

If you need, do some research by going to the website of for your town/city – e.g. Google “name of your city/town government” ex. Chicago government. In most cases the site will have information about the structure of the government, what the legislative body is, and, importantly, contact information for officials and staff members you may need to first communicate with.

In large cities with mayors you will likely need to identify an appropriate staff person to communicate with, such as a Public Affairs or Community Outreach Director. Most sites will have a “Mayor’s Office” section. Many will likely include a feature to help you identify who your city councilor or alderman is.

If you need help, let us know. UCS subscribes to a directory of state and municipal officials which includes contact information for elected and non-elected) and key staff for most cities and towns in the country.

### **Use Your Network**

Do you have a personal relationship with any of your elected officials? Are there people you know who have relationships with key local decision makers and could help you or help influence/persuade them? While the tips below can help you reach out no matter what, a personal connection can help ease the way.

### **Making Contact**

We suggest the best way to make contact with the official or appropriate staff person is via email. This allows for a clear record of your communication and helps to minimize misunderstandings. Please use and personalize the sample letter we provide in this tool kit providing any additional details or information that helps persuade the decision maker to act – e.g. relationships as identified above, support you have provided, contacts you have in the community, leadership on the issue from members of your congressional delegation, your mayor or city council’s history of issuing proclamations or passing resolutions on similar national/international issues, such as climate change, women’s rights, or immigration, etc. If you do not receive a response to your email within five to seven days we suggest you call the office and ask to speak to the appropriate person who would manage this inquiry. Be prepared

to provide whoever answers the phone – or the staff members voice mail -- a very brief description of who you are, your request, and when it was sent. Be persistent.

## **Involve Others**

Identify some friends, colleagues, family members, or neighbors who would be willing to contact the same office to deliver a similar message urging their support of a Call to Prevent Nuclear War resolution or proclamation. Urge them to refer to you as the person who originally submitted the request.

## **Stay In Touch**

Let us know how your efforts are going or if you need additional help: **Contact the team within the UCS Global Security Program, [smeyer@ucsusa.org](mailto:smeyer@ucsusa.org) or [hparra@ucsusa.org](mailto:hparra@ucsusa.org).** We can walk you through the process over email or over the phone at a time that is convenient for you. We also welcome suggestions for other Call to Prevent Nuclear War activities in your community.