

ANTI-ALEC ORGANIZING PRIMER

PART IV – HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE

If your legislator still refuses to drop their affiliation with ALEC, it's time for your group to start actively seeking answers by putting them on the record yourself. We believe that politicians work for the people and shouldn't be allowed to operate in secrecy. **Respectfully** getting a politician in front of a camera, asking them questions, posting the footage on a publicly available medium and letting their answers—or lack thereof—speak for themselves is an acceptable tactic in raising awareness in our communities, especially in areas where the press isn't doing their job. All you need to get started is a camera a social media account and some very important guiding principles to ensure that you are dedicating yourself to truth in telling the full story and safety at events.

TRACKING YOUR LEGISLATOR

Throughout the year, your community will put together events all over the district, ranging from parades, barbecues, ribbon-cuttings, and county fairs. It's expected that your local politician will play a role in these events, either by speaking or just showing up to shake hands – **these are prime opportunities for you to ask your elected officials questions about ALEC and policy. You should take advantage of them.**

- I. **Do Your Research** – Before even considering going after your local legislator, it's important that you know the issues by heart, as you should be prepared for the legislator to respond to your questions. Remember, you're holding a camera – you need to sound confident and prepared.
- II. **Finding Your Legislator** – Most politicians will announce their public events ahead of time for the same reason you do: to maximize the number of people present. Use this to your advantage – a common place to start finding your legislator's whereabouts will be the Politics section of your in-state publications, as well as the legislator's social media accounts.
- III. **Preparation** – Before going to an event, check to make sure all your equipment is charged and that you have sufficient space on your device to record a long video; nothing is worse than putting in the effort to find and attend an event and not be able to do what you came to do.
- IV. **Preparation, Cont.** – Make sure you have direct questions prepared. It's important that you ask very direct questions so that your elected official is placed in the position where they have to come clean. Here is a sample of some questions you might ask:
 1. Are you ready to end your affiliation in ALEC?
 2. Have you ever taken scholarship money or has taxpayer money ever reimbursed you for trips to ALEC events?
 3. Have you ever accepted campaign contributions from ALEC members or employees of ALEC members?
 4. Will you provide your constituents a list of every ALEC associated corporate lobbyist you met with at ALEC events?
 5. Will you provide us with transcripts of ALEC meetings so we can see how you came to support ALEC legislation?
- V. **DON'T GO ALONE** – You will feel more comfortable going as a group, further, your elected official will get a sense that this isn't just one constituent, but organized opposition to ALEC.
- VI. **RECORD EVERYTHING** – Before you even enter the venue, ensure that your camera is already recording so that you don't miss a single second. It's important that there be a full and accurate account of what is said in the meeting.
- VII. **Approaching the Legislator** – You should think creatively about how best to position yourself to get the message directly to the politician and to other constituents. But remember, you are not there to

disrupt. You are there to ask legitimate questions that concern your community. That means you should approach your elected official with respect, civility and confidence that your questions are important and require a direct answer.

VIII. Are There Reporters There? – A lot of times at these public events, the politician will have press in tow. You should always feel free to introduce yourself to the reporter, identify yourself as a constituent and tell the reporter why you are concerned.

IX. Uploading and Sharing Your Footage – After the event, make sure to upload and share your footage and tag your legislator directly, if possible. One of the best ways to do this is uploading the footage on Youtube and sharing the link on Twitter/Facebook. The best thing about having your legislator on camera, however, is that **YOU CAN USE IT FOR THE BASIS OF YOUR OUTREACH MESSAGING**. Did your legislator side-step or deny every question? Did they completely ignore you? These are things you can make the public aware about.

REMEMBER: BE RESPECTFUL – COMPLY WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AT ALL TIMES.