

Advancing Environmental Issues One Step at a Time

Have you ever wondered why the political candidates, legislators and the governor don't talk about environmental issues? It could be that no one is talking to the candidates about those issues. If they do not hear from their constituents and potential voters, they do not know that the voters are concerned about protecting the environment.

As a voter, you can educate the candidates following some simple steps that are outlined in this document. Perhaps most importantly, talk to your friends, neighbors, and relatives about the candidates and the issues. Our opposition isn't afraid to talk about issues and we shouldn't be afraid.

Acquainting Candidates with Environmental Issues

As a voter, you are in a position to educate a candidate. Here is a simple formula:

- Make the candidate aware of the issue and solutions. Write an email or letter to the candidate describing the issue and what you would like them to support. Include your name, address and phone number in case the candidate wants to follow-up. If the candidate wants more information and you need assistance with an explanation, contact iowa.chapter@sierraclub.org.
- When a candidate is shaking hands, have a one-minute summary of your issue and tell the candidate that you would like to see him or her support the issue.
- Ask the candidate how he or she feels about the issue when they appear at public meetings and campaign events.
- Volunteer for candidates who support your issue, to help them get elected to office. Once they are serving as elected officials, they can begin implementing environmental policies.
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper about your issue. Each newspaper has its own requirements for letters to editor so check with the paper.
- Build some enthusiasm and awareness about environmental issues by talking about the issues to your neighbors, friends and relatives. Don't be bashful about talking about political issues! Our opponents don't hesitate.
- Ask your neighbors who are like-minded about the issue to talk to the candidates and write letters to the editor. Having other supporters helps ensure that your interests are known by the candidate and are supported by more than one person.
- If you have a personal social media account, be sure to post comments on the issues and candidates. If you're not already linked into the social networking phenomenon, now is a perfect time to become a member of the community.
- Express your views on talk radio. Although it can be intimidating at first, talk radio is one of the key means for the public to learn about issues.
- Finally, and most importantly, make your choice at the ballot box. And vote! Every vote is important.



Iowa Capitol, by Pam Mackey-Taylor