



**CORPORATE
ACCOUNTABILITY
INTERNATIONAL**

CHALLENGING ABUSE, PROTECTING PEOPLE

formerly **Infact**

Toolkit:

Organizing in your community to challenge Trump's pro- privatization infrastructure agenda

Summer 2017

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Introduction

Thank you for picking up this toolkit! Whether you attended our kick-off training conference call, spoke with one of our organizers one-on-one, or stumbled across this on our or another organization's website, we're glad you're here. Activists like you are exactly what we need to rise to this moment, challenge Trump's pro-privatization infrastructure agenda, and organize toward a long-term vision for safe, clean, affordable public water.

Before you jump in, here are three things to carry with you as you read:

1. **You can make a difference.** Corporate Accountability International, a powerhouse in securing big victories over huge transnational corporations for four decades, was founded by four activists in a university basement in Minnesota. Never underestimate what you and a handful of dedicated friends can accomplish.
2. **You're not alone. (And yes, it's hard work.)** We established the Corporate Accountability Action League in response to the election of Donald Trump to support activists like you in doing the hard and necessary work of challenging the systemic forces that got us here—in your own community. We've got tools, we've got resources, we've got expertise—and we're here to help you set goals, hold you accountable to them, and achieve them, toward a shared vision for a just, sustainable world.
3. **Call us! (Seriously.)** This toolkit is a great start—and it's not enough. As César Chávez is reported to have said, organizing is about talking to “one person... then another... then another.” We've packed a lot in here, but this is not designed to be comprehensive nor used in isolation—that would take a few hundred more pages. Please give us a call at 617.695.2525 or email us at actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org so we can walk you through the toolkit, fill in the gaps, and help you make a winning plan.

CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY INTERNATIONAL

Corporate Accountability International contributes to creating social change by organizing to stop corporate abuse. Our model recognizes the imbalance of power that lies at the root of many of the injustices we face today. We organize strategically to shift the balance of power away from transnational corporations and the wealthy few—and back to people. The organization launched in 1977 as Infact, taking on single-issue campaigns to challenge corporate power (initially, the Nestlé boycott challenging its abusive infant formula marketing). Today, we run multiple campaigns that are building a movement for corporate accountability and social justice.

We employ a range of strategies and tactics to stop corporate abuse. These include building a base of people power, shifting the national conversation, securing legal precedents that change the rules of the game, and shifting power to democratic institutions at every level -- from the hyper-local to the global. And our approach works, even when there's a White House administration that seeks to block and roll back progress on all of the issues we care about.

THE CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY ACTION LEAGUE

People like you are what make it all possible.

There is no doubt that we're living in very challenging times. Not only has Trump stoked racist, homophobic, anti-immigrant, Islamophobic, and misogynist forces, but his presidency has also drawn back the veil on the role and influence of corporate decision-makers in our government -- and taken it to a whole new level.

As Naomi Klein said on inauguration day: This is a corporate coup d'état. The Trump administration is a kind of coming-out party for corporate power and influence. For example, appointing Rex Tillerson, the former CEO of Exxon Mobil, as secretary of state is a blatant announcement to the world that the oil industry is in charge. But the truth is, the State Department's agenda has been aligned with the oil industry's interests for decades. It's been caught red-handed many times, working behind the scenes furthering the interests of the oil and other abusive industries.

And it is absolutely enraging, yes. But we're also in a moment of huge opportunity: People like you are fired up and ready to challenge the deep-rooted, structural forces that have impeded progress for so long.

If our history—and social change history—has taught us anything, it's that we don't win by playing defense. Even under the most hostile administration, we have to go on the offensive—and that's by keeping our eyes on a longer-term vision and a longer, strategic campaign plan. And it all comes back to people power.

So, the organization launched the Corporate Accountability Action League in response to the election of Donald Trump to give people like you the tools you need to join us in proactively working toward that larger vision and long-game plan. Before Trump even took office, the Action League helped secure a big win for climate justice, when Obama fulfilled a portion of the U.S.' commitment to the Green Climate Fund. Then, Action League members helped make the People's Climate Movement a success in communities across the country. And now, we're poised to go bigger and bolder to stop a widescale infrastructure privatization push under Trump.

In the coming months, Corporate Accountability Action League members and lead activists across the country will be organizing to ensure members of Congress don't support any infrastructure plan that would push privatization. Meanwhile, we'll be building widespread support for reinvestment in public water infrastructure on the local and national level.

Here's why and how -- and how we know we can do it:

THE CAMPAIGN TO CHALLENGE CORPORATE CONTROL OF WATER

Today, we are facing a global water crisis. Every fifteen seconds a child dies from a lack of access to clean water and sanitation. The water systems that serve the rest of us are in critical need of reinvestment. Water giants and their financial backers are exploiting the crisis to transfer public water into private hands. As a result, the investments required to guarantee every person their most basic human need are becoming a casualty of corporate greed.

Public (i.e., democratically controlled and accountable, and publicly financed) water systems work. They have long been the backbone of public health, economic development, and environmental sustainability. Yet Nestlé and the bottled water industry's misleading marketing has deeply damaged public confidence in, and the resulting political will to adequately fund, this essential public service -- leading people to believe the only place to get water is from a bottle. At the same time, there has been a decades-long push to falsely position the private sector as somehow better than the government at providing services for the public. It's time to get back to basics...to stick with what we know works...and to do so while we can still prevent a global corporate water grab, saving millions of lives in so doing.

In a few short years, Corporate Accountability International has been a part of the global movement for water justice that has helped compel: the U.N. General Assembly to recognize the human right to water; dramatic shifts in public attitudes toward bottled water; and wide-ranging action by decision-makers to support the tap. Now, with the groundwork laid, and people across the globe calling for public officials to shut the spigot to water profiteers, the organization is running coordinated campaigns to help revitalize, protect, and build public water systems the world over. Together we can realize a world where no life is lost for lack of something so fundamental as safe water.

TRUMP'S INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

In the midst of this global water crisis, here in the U.S., our public water systems desperately need investment: they face a nearly \$20 billion annual funding gap. But rather than provide the public investment we so urgently need, the Trump administration has put forth an agenda that would allow a massive corporate-driven grab of public resources, services, and assets—including the privatization of our public water systems. This infrastructure agenda—on the surface, \$1 trillion over 10 years—is actually shaping up to be a giant corporate giveaway, and could facilitate the privatization of vital services like our water systems.

THE WATER ACT

The good news is that there is a piece of strong, progressive legislation that has already been introduced in Congress to provide the infrastructure investment we truly need: The Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity, and Reliability (WATER) Act. Rep. John Conyers from Detroit has led the charge on the WATER Act, which would fill the funding gap between what our public water systems need and what is currently available—and do it by closing corporate tax loopholes. It would invest \$35 billion annually in water infrastructure, and allow us to begin to ensure that all people in the country have access to the safe, affordable water service they need.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

People power.

Here's the thing: It's clear that this is a tough political climate for passing progressive legislation. But we've already seen that massive public outcry can stop Trump's disastrous plans (from the repeated stalling of Trump's health care push to Andrew Pudzer withdrawing from his nomination as labor secretary), and his privatization push is no different. By organizing in communities across the country, we can make Trump's infrastructure agenda toxic for our members of Congress. And we can uphold the WATER Act as the positive vision we know we need—and build a ton of power behind it to move this vision forward. Think of building this power as the first step—and that's where you come in.

We're so glad you're with us. Let's organize!

Dive in

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN PLAN

This document is meant to help guide your local organizing at the big-picture level. Use it to guide your decision-making and to ask: Do our tactics add up to the impact we seek? When you get mired in the weeds of organizing, refer back to it to remember what it's all about. And when you need a boost... give us a call!

Action League campaign goals: May to October 2017

PRIORITY GOAL: Mobilize opposition to Trump's pro-privatization infrastructure agenda and build support for direct federal investment in public water systems.

Measures of success

You'll know you're on the right track, building power, and making an impact, when you...

- Hold a campaign kick-off meeting to create plans for how to build support for public water in your community.
- Organize a delegation to your member of Congress to build opposition to Trump's privatization push and call on them to co-sponsor the WATER Act.
- Generate 3 - 5 letters to the editor and/or other forms of media expressing opposition to Trump's infrastructure agenda and support for the WATER Act as an alternative.
- Sign on 10 local leaders ("VIPs") and 10 local organizations to a letter in support of the WATER Act.
- Sign on 200 people to a petition opposing Trump's agenda and voicing support for the WATER Act.
- Secure action by your member of Congress:
 - Public statement of opposition to Trump's infrastructure agenda.
 - Vote against or abstain from voting on Trump's plan when introduced.
 - Co-sponsor the WATER Act.

SECONDARY GOAL: Identify potential privatization deals, support national pressure actions challenging the world's biggest water privatizers, and advance proactive local or state policies to prevent water privatization.

Local Action League tactics:

Tier 1 tactics (high priority, high impact):

- A. **Advocacy:** Engage your member of Congress on Trump's infrastructure agenda and the alternative that the WATER Act provides.
 - Identify and organize a delegation of activists and/or influential people to key members of Congress.
 - Develop a power map of the member of Congress in order to determine influencers to reach out to for support.
- B. **Generate media visibility:** Organize activists to generate letters to the editor and/or op-eds to build opposition to Trump's privatization push and raise visibility of the WATER Act as an alternative.
- C. **Coalition building:** Recruit high-profile and strategic coalition supporters and endorsers for the WATER Act: local influencers and allied organizations.

- D. **Grassroots support:** Recruit hundreds of people to add their voices to a petition opposing Trump's infrastructure agenda and supporting the WATER Act.

Tier 2 tactics:

- A. **Pressuring the private water industry:** Participate in national actions in solidarity with members of communities like Pittsburgh and Flint that have been affected by the abuses of private water corporations like Veolia.
- B. **Engaging local officials on privatization:** Hold a meeting with a city council leader in charge of water/infrastructure and/or the mayor to learn about any moves toward privatization in your municipality, educate them about Trump's agenda, and build their support for the WATER Act.
- C. **Leadership development:** Hold community meetings to lay out plans, recruit people into action, and plan out Congressional delegations.

Additional measures of success

1. Resolution by city council and/or mayor in support of the WATER Act.
2. Build a relationship with at least one staffer of your member of Congress who has power to make recommendations to the member of Congress—and follow up as needed.
3. Develop a detailed power map of the member of Congress.
4. Build resources for the Action League and Corporate Accountability International by holding a house party.

Milestones for the campaign:

6/13: Action league conference call

Week of 6/25 or 7/2: Local kick-off meetings

Week of 8/6 or 8/13: Meet with member of Congress

Late Sept/early Oct: In-depth training & strategy sessions in Boston

HOLDING A KICK-OFF MEETING

Organizing an initial kick-off meeting is a great way to launch your local organizing. It can identify potential volunteer leaders who will help plan and carry out your action(s), it can inspire attendees, and it can spark immediate action toward moving your member of Congress to oppose Trump's infrastructure agenda.

How to:

1. Pick a date, time, and location, consulting with people you know are already interested and reaching out to organizations that should be involved, and considering your target turnout. (5 people or 50 people? It will affect your plans!)
2. Outline the agenda (see sample below), paying attention to sources of motivation/inspiration (do you want to invite a guest speaker to kick things off?) and ways to plug people into next steps immediately (have a subsequent meeting or action on the calendar within 1 - 2 weeks that you can announce at the kick-off meeting).
3. Recruit attendees, using personal networks, social media, outreach through local organizations, and putting out posters/flyers, etc.
4. Get a couple friends or family involved to be on your team—and prep them.
 - Ideally, you can assign roles for your closest crew—leading a break-out group, signing people in and giving out nametags, leading one section of the meeting, taking photos, etc.
5. Hold your event (don't forget a sign-up sheet with contact information).
6. Follow-up (thank people for coming, recruit for the next event, and hold individual meetings or calls with other activists).

SAMPLE KICK-OFF MEETING AGENDA

(10 mins) Welcome and introductions

- Name, what brought you here today, fun intro question

(10 mins) Context: Corporate Accountability International & the Action League

(10 mins) Context on water campaign and Trump's infrastructure agenda

(15 mins) Brief power mapping training

(15 mins) Brainstorm: How can we move local and state public officials to oppose the Trump infrastructure agenda and support the WATER Act?

(15 mins) Vote & discuss (straw poll)

(15 mins) Next steps & to-dos, including setting next meeting

******For a more detailed agenda, and to talk through your kick-off meeting plans, call our campaign headquarters at (617) 695-2525 and ask for an Action League organizer, or email actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org.***

TALKING POINTS

Challenging Trump's pro-privatization infrastructure agenda, supporting the WATER Act

Topline narrative:

Everyone deserves to turn on their taps and know that the water flowing out is clean, safe, and affordable. We can all agree that this basic human right to water is something that we should protect, and the best way to do that is managing our water for a common good. But right now, that idea is under threat. Trump's privatization agenda is a dream come true for giant corporations that are chomping at the bit to take over and profit from our infrastructure, including our water systems. The good news is, we know that when communities come together, they can prevent the privatization of their water systems -- we've made it happen in cities from St. Louis, Missouri to Lagos, Nigeria. Together, we can mobilize grassroots action and build the political will for commonsense policies that will ensure public reinvestment in our most essential public service: our water systems.

Shared values

- Everyone has the right to clean, safe, affordable water.
- We should manage our shared resources as common good, not as commodities for corporations to profit from.

Problem

1. Today, our water systems desperately need funding, thanks to a decades-long, global campaign to aggressively position the private sector as somehow superior to the government in serving people's basic needs.
2. We need to act now to plug the nearly \$20 billion annual funding gap for our public water systems in order to guarantee access to clean drinking water in the U.S.
3. In the midst of this crisis, the Trump administration has put forth an agenda that would allow a massive corporate-driven grab of public resources, services, and assets. Examples include:
 - a. Opening up land on national parks to oil drilling;
 - b. Betsy DeVos' push to privatize the public school system; and
 - c. The privatization of our public water systems.
4. While the private water industry claims to invest in infrastructure or save municipalities money, in fact its interests often conflict with the public good, with disastrous results including higher water rates, failure to adequately invest in infrastructure, labor abuses, and decreased public control over water systems.
5. When infrastructure like public water systems are privatized, [it's like jet fuel for inequality](#), extracting wealth from communities, jeopardizing the safety and wellbeing of workers, and leading to a loss of community control of this essential public good.
6. While this is nothing new—corporations have been lobbying decision-makers to subsidize and facilitate the transfer of public goods to private hands for decades—Trump's infrastructure agenda promises to aggressively push privatization of our nation's infrastructure on a massive scale.
 - a. Trump's infrastructure agenda—on the surface, \$1 trillion over 10 years—is actually shaping up to be a giant corporate giveaway and could facilitate the privatization of vital services like public transit, roads, and even our water systems.
 - b. Even worse, Trump's privatization push would fail to prioritize fixing and expanding infrastructure where it's most needed. Giving incentives to the private industry won't solve our infrastructure crisis because corporations—which are

mandated to maximize profit—will never take on an infrastructure project that's desperately needed but not profitable.

Solution

1. We need to create a nationwide movement that is demanding democratic and public water solutions.
 - a. We must secure solutions where our public water is treated as a common good and human right for all, where people's health isn't put at risk so corporations can turn a profit, where resources like water and control of water stay in the community and aren't extracted by power-hungry corporations.
2. One of the first steps to building this movement is supporting an alternative to Trump's disastrous agenda.
 - a. Rep. John Conyers from Detroit has introduced the WATER Act, which would fill the funding gap between what our public water systems need and what is currently available, and it will do it by closing corporate tax loopholes.
 - i. The WATER Act will invest \$35 billion annually in water infrastructure, and allow us to begin to ensure that all people in the country have access to the safe, affordable water service that they deserve.
3. Supporting the WATER Act is just the beginning of the nationwide, people-powered movement we are launching to oppose Trump's attempt to turn over our infrastructure -- including our water systems -- to private corporations.

Action

1. In the coming months, Corporate Accountability Action League members and lead activists across the country will be organizing to ensure members of Congress don't support any infrastructure plan that would push water privatization.
2. And, we'll build widespread support for reinvestment in public water infrastructure on the local and national level.
3. **Over the next few months**, we're working with members and action leaguers to organize locally in their communities to stop Trump's massive corporate privatization bonanza by:
 - a. Moving your member of Congress to oppose any infrastructure plan that would push water privatization and only support a plan that provides for direct federal investments.
 - b. Moving them to co-sponsor and/or support the WATER Act.
 - c. Building support for reinvestment in public water infrastructure via local official sign-ons, petition-gathering, letters to the editor, and more.
4. Together, we can stop Trump's infrastructure agenda and put forward a real solution that protects people's human right to water -- but we need YOUR help to do it!

BUILDING POWER: HOSTING A HOUSE PARTY

Our movement needs to build its power, and there are two primary sources of power: people and money. House parties are a fun way to bring people together, create community, and build both kinds of power: people power and resources to fuel our movement. These are moments where we launch people forward -- people who have been asking what they can do to bring about change.

Instead of launching a campaign with a kick-off meeting first, another great way to begin organizing around your campaign is by hosting a fundraising house party first. This can be a fun way to do it because a house party may attract a different and often larger group of people; you can invite a big group of people and get them all excited about Corporate Accountability International and the campaign once they're all in the same room; and you can use it as a way to identify the people who are excited to keep working together (versus those who prefer to support financially) to catapult your organizing from there.

The idea here is to hold this houseparty and then hold a kickoff meeting coming out of the house party a week or two later, with people who were really excited about the campaign at the house party.

In addition to fundraising, you can organize a house party to accomplish one or more of the following goals:

- Plan a first campaign event.
- Recruit for the kick-off meeting (e.g. call five friends or send out emails together).
- Take action together (e.g. writing letters to the editor).
- Educate and motivate (e.g. film screening, guest speaker, etc.).

If you want to organize a house party, check out [this handy step-by-step guide](#). Some of the content is a little outdated, since we created it during a particular push on our climate campaign, but the basic steps, tips, and tools are all the same.

It includes the following contents:

- Movement building: Hosting a house party.
- Brainstorming an invitation list.
- Sample email invitation.
- RSVP phone rap.
- House party agenda.
- Fundraising: The Art of a Confident Ask

Moving your public officials

POWER MAPPING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

In order to effect change and move an elected official to take action, we need to familiarize ourselves with the political, social, and economic structures that influence an elected official's decision-making. Power mapping is a helpful exercise to learn more about an elected official, decipher who has influence over them, and identify ways to engage with those people to ultimately move them to support or oppose legislation.

Steps of power mapping

- 1) **Identify your target:** the person who has the power to make the decision that will win your campaign.
 - a) In the cases of Trump's infrastructure agenda and the WATER Act, this will be your decided member of Congress.
- 2) **Research who has influence over your target.** Be a creative researcher. Look for the target's donors, committees they serve on, their past voting records, political endorsers, institutions, media outlets that favor the target, family, organizations that also work on the issue, etc. You can plot this information in the template below.
 - a) To learn more about their network and influencers: Check OpenSecrets.org, LittleSis.org, their LinkedIn, and campaign website (looking for who/what endorsed them and what platforms they ran on).
 - b) To learn more about the issues they focus on and groups they work with: Check their social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter), local news coverage, and official congressional website.
- 3) **Rank those people based on levels of influence.** Evaluate the individuals and organizations on your powermap by how influential they are and how much of a priority they are to the elected official.
 - Who on your list are most influential to the elected official?
 - Who are most influential to the official's constituents?
 - Who are likely to be with us and who likely against us? Who or what groups are the most influential to them?
- 4) **Decide who to organize.** Using your rankings from Step 3 and who you realistically have access to, select someone to prioritize. Think about:
 - a) Who do we have access to?
 - b) Who could we realistically organize or move to be on our side?
- 5) **Finally, develop your campaign strategies and tactics.** Create these based on who you need to move, the best avenues for influence, and your ability to accomplish them. For example, you may determine that:
 - a) A big media event like a press conference may be the best idea because the elected official has a good relationship with local media outlets and is highly cautious about negative press.
 - b) Building a coalition of groups that are most influential to them or they're a part of would hold the most sway.

- c) Perhaps holding a delegation at their office with representatives from groups that endorsed them would do the trick.
 - d) Something(s) else!
- Hold a brainstorming session with your group to decide which avenues would be most effective.

Power-mapping checklist of decision-makers and influences

Decision-maker/Target

Personal	<u>RANK influence:</u> (1 most influential, 4 not influential)	<u>RANK support:</u> (1 most likely to be with us, 4 not at all with us)
Family:		
Friends:		
Inner social circles:		
Personal charities/personal issues of concern:		
Religious affiliations:		

Future ambitions:		
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Financial		
Campaign contributors:		

Public		
Media:		
Target audiences (for the decision-maker/target):		
Other organizations (potential or current allies):		
Important influencers		
Elected officials:		

Endorsers:		
Celebrities:		
Prominent/affiliated institutions:		

Ultimate decision: Who to organize?

HOLDING A DELEGATION WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL

It is the job of elected officials to respond to their constituents -- people whose votes put them in the position they are in. By holding a meeting with your elected official, you can put a face to an issue, convey your reasoning for why the elected official should support or oppose a specific piece of legislation, and build powerful relationships with your representatives that can transform an elected official into a champion for resisting Trump's infrastructure agenda!

How to:

- 1) Pick a few dates and times you'd like to meet with your elected official, consulting with your network to determine who can and should attend the meeting and consider your target turn-out (should be between 2 - 4 people).
 - a) Check when your elected officials are on [congressional recess](#), and if possible set a time when Congress is not in session and your representatives are in their home districts.
- 2) Call your elected official's district office and ask for the name and email of the staffer that works on water infrastructure.
 - a) Some offices will not share the names of staffers and instead ask you to schedule through a scheduling email.
- 3) Email the staffer approximately two weeks before your desired meeting dates requesting a meeting regarding water infrastructure issues (see template email below).
- 4) Create an agenda with those attending the meeting (see template agenda below).
- 5) Prepare your team.
 - a) Ideally, you can assign roles for attendees -- facilitator, speakers, note-taker, time-keeper.
 - b) You can also assign pieces of the agenda to multiple attendees depending on the size of your delegation -- introduction of organization, connecting with elected official, strong ask, etc.
- 6) Hold your delegation.
 - a) Don't forget to bring sign-on letters and petitions, reading materials on the WATER Act, and to take a picture in the office!
- 7) Follow up.
 - a) Thank people for attending the delegation and send a thank-you email to the staffer with PDF versions of the information you brought and asking for a time to talk next week.

Sample outreach email:

Hello,

I hope this finds you well. My name is _____, and I'm a volunteer at a public interest organization called Corporate Accountability International. Corporate Accountability International represent hundreds of thousands of members and supporters across the country and in [STATE/CITY]. I'm also one of [ELECTED OFFICIAL'S NAME] constituents!

A few of our volunteers and I would love to sit down with [ELECTED OFFICIAL'S NAME] or the appropriate staffer about water infrastructure issues. We're looking to schedule a meeting around [DATE].

Please let us know which times we might be able to meet with [ELECTED OFFICIAL].

Thank you,

[YOUR NAME]

Sample agenda:

Tailor this agenda based on who you're meeting with (either the elected official or a staff person working for them) and what you know about them.

- 1) Introductions
 - a) Ask questions about *the elected official or the staffer*.
 - i) When did you start working for the representative?
 - ii) What issues do you typically work on?
 - iii) How have you been adjusting to changed conditions over the past few months?
 - b) Introduce yourself.
- 2) Information-gathering from staffer.
 - a) What matters to them and their boss, how do they view Trump's infrastructure approach, what issues are they hearing about from constituents currently?
- 3) Context Corporate Accountability International and campaign.
 - a) Overview of Corporate Accountability International and the Corporate Accountability Action League.
 - b) Express why water privatization and public-private partnerships are a terrible idea for our cities.
 - c) Share how Trump's infrastructure agenda could lead to wide-scale water privatization.
 - d) Introduce the WATER Act and highlight 2 - 3 key provisions that would resonate with the elected official (e.g. Made in America provision, assistance to rural and tribal communities, etc.). See the "resources" section of this guide for links about the WATER Act.
- 4) Discussion/responses from staffer: Gauge reactions, clarify, make your case, find out what they are currently doing on the issue of water infrastructure and public-private partnerships.
- 5) Request action.
 - a) Make the ask! *Will _____ oppose any infrastructure plan that pushes water privatization? Is the WATER Act something _____ would be interested in co-sponsoring?*

- b) When possible, use the staffer's own language/motivations to provide a compelling reason for them to take action (i.e. "As you were telling us earlier, you care a lot about access to clean water. Given this interest, would _____ oppose an infrastructure plan that pushes water privatization, and is the WATER Act something _____ would support?").
 - c) Describe the impact it could have on the elected official's constituents if they opposed Trump's privatization push and instead supported the WATER Act.
- 6) Follow-up.
- a) Make sure you have their contact info.
 - b) If appropriate, take a picture after your meeting. (Note that cell phone pictures tend to be lower quality, and you'll want this one to be good! Ask around in advance to see if a member of your group has a higher-quality camera they can bring.)
 - c) Get them any additional information you promised right away.
 - d) If they can't give you an answer right there about your ask, tell them you'll be following up to set up a time to talk about your representative's response.
 - e) If they say no or that they're unsure: Ask them what they need to see from people/groups like us going forward to change their mind. Consider other ways you could move them to see the importance of this issue -- ex. Bring a prominent constituent or organization to vocally oppose Trump's infrastructure agenda and support the WATER Act.
 - f) If they say yes: Think about how you can support them as a champion with timely updates and public appreciation. Also ask for them to suggest other elected officials you can move to get on board!

In addition to power mapping and holding a delegation, there are other tactics your Action League group can take to move your member of Congress. These include collecting signatures for a petition, and getting sign-ons from local elected officials (like mayors and city council members) and organizations on a letter that will be sent to your member of Congress.

PAPER PETITION

A link to the petition form can be found [here](#). You can print and duplicate this, and have these sheets ready at actions, meetings, and petition collections. (Print just one copy of the cover page with full text to have on hand, and lots of copies of the second page for signatures!)

You should keep a copy of all petitions for your meeting with your elected official, and scan and email copies to us at actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org or mail copies to Corporate Accountability International, 10 Milk St, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108 so that we can keep track of the total petitions around the country!

You can also sign and share our online petition [here](#).

SIGN-ON LETTER: LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

You can sign local elected officials onto this letter by filling out [this Google form](#), or by printing out the page below, then scanning and sending it to us at actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org or mailing a copy in to us at:

**Corporate Accountability International
10 Milk St., Suite 610
Boston, MA 02108**

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the undersigned local elected officials, call on you to support the Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity and Reliability (WATER) Act (H.R. 1673). We must prioritize funding of water infrastructure to help ensure safe, affordable drinking water and wastewater disposal service for all of our communities.

As local leaders, we are on the front lines of a water crisis that is bubbling to the surface across the United States. Our public water systems are aging and in desperate need of repair, while the amount of federal funding flowing into our communities for these costly upgrades is dwindling. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that it will cost at least \$35 billion a year over the next two decades to upgrade our country's water infrastructure.

As elected officials, we have a duty to ensure that our constituents have access to safe drinking water and adequate wastewater disposal, but without decisive action by Congress to create a dedicated pool of federal dollars for water infrastructure, a growing number of communities will be unable to provide safe, affordable drinking water and sewer services for their residents.

The Trump administration has promised an infrastructure plan that likely will include massive tax breaks to Wall Street and corporations to privatize our nation's infrastructure. Privatization, including through public-private partnerships, is a terrible idea for water and sewer systems. Water privatization often results in increased water rates, deteriorated service quality and a loss of water department jobs. Worse, many of the communities most in need of water upgrades, including in rural and low-income areas and communities of color, would be left out of Trump's plan because private companies won't invest in places where they can't make money. We need a plan for upgrading our water infrastructure that will create jobs and help all communities, regardless of their size or credit rating.

That's why we ask you to support the WATER Act. By investing \$35-billion annually in water infrastructure, we can begin to ensure that all people have access to the safe, affordable water service that they deserve and we can create nearly 1-million jobs across the economy in the process.

The WATER Act will:

- Create the WATER Fund, which would be funded by ending the deferral on income taxes on offshore corporate profits, and would be distributed annually through the existing Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs and certain grant programs.

- Allow state Drinking Water SRFs to issue grants to private properties to replace homeowners' service lines that contain, or may contain, lead.
- Establish a School Drinking Water Improvement Grant program to provide funding to public schools that wish to test, repair, replace, or install the infrastructure necessary to ensure drinking water fountains or bottle filling stations are lead free.
- Amend the Drinking Water SRF eligibility to restrict funding to publicly owned and operated water systems and small private mom-and-pop systems, so that large water corporations no longer take subsidized loans and resources away from municipal and small systems. It allows communities to use SRF funds to buy private water systems.
- Support affordability programs to help prevent water shutoffs.
- Assist small, rural and tribal communities to make necessary improvements to their water and wastewater systems.
- Create a new grant program for residential onsite sewage disposal systems to help households install and improve their septic tanks, and it will provide dedicated funding for rural household water wells.
- Require at least half of SRF funds be used to provide grants and other additional subsidization to help disadvantaged communities improve their water and sewer systems.
- Dedicate 3 percent of Drinking Water SRF dollars for Indian Tribes and Alaska Native villages to provide drinking water.
- Support American workers by encouraging the use of union labor for water infrastructure projects, and requiring Davis-Bacon prevailing wage law to be applied to all projects funding by the Drinking Water SRF and the Clean Water SRF programs. It also requires the use of U.S.-made iron and steel on water system projects funded by state Drinking Water SRF programs.

If the water crisis in Flint, Michigan has taught us anything, it is that we cannot continue to ignore our drinking water and wastewater systems. Congress must take strong action now to invest in water infrastructure. We urge our decision makers in Washington to resist Trump's plan to privatize our water systems and give tax breaks to Wall Street. Further, we urge members of the U.S. House of Representatives to become co-sponsors of the WATER Act, and we urge members of the U.S. Senate to introduce the WATER Act in their chamber.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Office held/Title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

City and State: _____

SIGN-ON LETTER: ORGANIZATIONS

You can sign organizations onto this letter by filling out [this Google form](#), or by printing out the page below, then scanning and sending it to us at actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org or mailing a copy in to us at:

**Corporate Accountability International
10 Milk St., Suite 610
Boston, MA 02108**

Dear Member of Congress,

The undersigned organizations urge you to support the Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity and Reliability (WATER) Act (H.R. 1673).

Federal funding for our public water and sewer systems has decreased significantly. From 1977 to 2014 per capita funding for water infrastructure decreased by 82 percent. Meanwhile, many of our water systems are reaching the end of their lifespan and are in desperate need of costly repairs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that we will need at least \$697-billion over the next 20 years to update our drinking water and wastewater systems.

Failing infrastructure isn't our only problem, however; in many parts of the country, people do not have access to safe drinking water and wastewater disposal because of a lack of investment in developing new infrastructure.

The Trump administration has promised an infrastructure plan that likely will include massive tax breaks to Wall Street and corporations to privatize our nation's infrastructure. Privatization, including through public-private partnerships, is a terrible idea for water and sewer systems. Water privatization often results in increased water rates, deteriorated service quality and a loss of water department jobs. Worse, many of the communities most in need of water upgrades, including in rural and low-income areas and communities of color, would be left out of Trump's plan because private companies won't invest in places where they can't make money. We need a plan for upgrading our water infrastructure that will create jobs and help all communities, regardless of their size or credit rating.

The WATER Act will invest \$35-billion annually in water infrastructure, and allow us to begin to ensure that all people in the country have access to the safe, affordable water service that they deserve and we can create nearly 1-million jobs across the economy in the process.

The WATER Act will:

- Create the WATER Fund, which would be funded by ending the deferral on income taxes on offshore corporate profits, and would be distributed annually through the existing Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs.
- Allow state Drinking Water SRFs to issue grants to private properties to replace

homeowners' service lines that contain, or may contain, lead.

- Establish a School Drinking Water Improvement Grant program to provide funding to public schools that wish to test, repair, replace, or install the infrastructure necessary to ensure drinking water fountains or bottle filling stations are lead free.
- Amend the Drinking Water SRF eligibility to restrict funding to publicly owned and operated water systems and small private mom-and-pop systems, so that large water corporations no longer take subsidized loans and resources away from municipal and small systems. It allows communities to use SRF funds to buy private water systems.
- Support affordability programs to help prevent water shutoffs.
- Assist small, rural and tribal communities to make necessary improvements to their water and wastewater systems.

Sincerely,

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Title/Position: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

I am authorized to sign on behalf of my organization:

Signed: _____

Signatories at present:

Securing media coverage

The key to any successful organizing is making sure people know about it, before, during, and after. (“If a tree falls in the woods...”) One of the best ways to amplify your message is through the media.

PITCHING JOURNALISTS TO WRITE ARTICLES

When you’re having an event, one of the best ways to get coverage is to invite reporters to attend the event and cover it themselves.

How-to:

- 1 - 4 weeks out: Create a list of local or regional reporters to reach out to (local newspapers, radio stations, TV news channels).
- 1 - 2 weeks out: Write a media advisory and press release. (Contact us for sample materials!)
- 3 - 7 days out: Send out a media advisory to let reporters know what will be happening and why it is newsworthy.
- 1 - 2 days out: Call reporters to pitch the event.
 - Tips:
 1. Keep it short & simple -- reporters are busy! BUT, don’t forget that you’re helping them do their job -- be confident.
 2. Give the details.
 3. Strong follow-up!
 - Make sure the reporter has your info.
 - Follow up the next day with a new piece of information about the event.
- One day out: Send the press release to reporters so they can begin writing stories. Make sure to note that it is not for public release until the day of the event!
 - One way to do this is to send out an “embargoed” copy of the release.
- Day of: Send out a final updated press release after the event. If the reporter did not attend, include pictures. If the reporter did attend, thank them. In both cases, offer to provide more information and photos and to connect them to prominent spokespeople.
 - Again, note that cell phone cameras are generally not high enough quality for newspapers. It’s wise to ensure that someone on your team for the event has a higher-quality camera and is responsible for taking good photos.
- 1 - 7 days after: Submit letters to the editor to amplify or secure coverage.

WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor (LTEs) of your local newspaper are a great way to raise the visibility of critical issues and upcoming or recent events, and educate members of your own community. They're also important to local elected officials, who monitor them to see what issues their community members are concerned about.

Instructions:

- 1) Find out how to submit letters to the editor to your local paper.
 - Usually it's via a simple form on the paper's webpage or an email to the editor.
- 2) Keep it short (150 - 175 words maximum).
- 3) Make one point and one point only.
- 4) Personalize it.
 - For instance, mention your role as a parent or teacher, your role in your community, or simply why you care about the issue.
- 5) LTEs more often get published when they're responding explicitly to a previously published article in the news outlet you're submitting to. (For instance, you could cite a recent story about water issues or Trump's infrastructure agenda.)
- 6) End your letter with a call to action (e.g., calling on your member of Congress to oppose Trump's privatization push).
- 7) Include your name, address, email address, and phone number below the letter.
- 8) Call the paper to confirm that they received your letter, asking when it's likely to be printed (best done one day after you submit your letter).
- 9) Monitor your news outlet until your letter is printed, and email a copy of it to us at Corporate Accountability International: info@stopcorporateabuse.org.

WRITING AN EFFECTIVE OP-ED

Op-eds are opinion pieces that are normally featured in the Opinion section of newspapers -- the second-most widely read page! An op-ed is normally written by someone who is an expert in the subject matter or a community leader. Op-eds are longer than letters to the editor, but they have similar goals of raising the visibility and credibility of your campaign.

There are a wealth of great resources that provide tools and tips for writing an op-ed (links below!), but the most important first step is identifying an author. For this campaign, we want to think about authors who could provide a credible voice to challenge Trump's infrastructure agenda and/or promote the WATER Act as a viable solution.

Some author ideas include...

- A labor union leader
- Mayor or other city official
- Public health advocate
- Racial justice leaders
- City council members
- Activist leader

Resources for writing op-eds and reaching out to potential authors:

- [The op-ed project](#)
- [Harvard Kennedy School](#)
- [Duke University op-ed guide](#)
- [The New York Times overview on op-eds](#)

*****If you'd like sample letters-to-the-editor, a sample press release, or general media advising, call our campaign headquarters at (617) 695-2525 and ask for an Action League organizer or email actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org.**

Further resources

We're continuing to develop more resources. Please reach out to us at (617) 695-2525 or actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org for the most up-to-date organizing tools, info sheets, tips, etc. we can offer!

Organizing tools

- **“What should I do if I want to organize in my community but don’t know where to start?”**
 - Call Corporate Accountability International headquarters at (617) 695-2525 and ask for an Action League organizer or email actionleague@stopcorporateabuse.org.
- **What is Corporate Accountability International?**
 - Find out more about our organization’s mission, history, and success here: <http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org/about-us>
- **Axioms for Organizers, by Fred Ross Sr.**
 - Classic toolkit for social justice organizing.
 - According to César Chávez: *“Fred did such a good job of explaining how poor people could build power I could even taste it. I thought, gee, it’s like digging a hole. There’s nothing complicated about it.”*
 - Available here: <http://www.fredrosssr.com/axiomsfororganizers/>
- **Beautiful Trouble: A toolbox for revolution**
 - Great ideas for actions/tactics: <http://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/>
- **350.org’s Guide to Action Planning**
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vi7Wx7uzUGE9_iDd5rdnXWagpFwTsHSJQtB_WGKHoVX4/edit

Research tools

- **OpenSecrets.org**
 - Find out where your federal representative’s campaign funds are coming from by looking at donors, industries, and PACs.
 - <http://www.opensecrets.org/>
- **Google News**
 - Look at recent media hits on your representative to see what they have been up to.
 - Google News works the same as searching normally in Google, but limits the results to just news articles.
 - <https://www.news.google.com/>
- **LittleSis.org**
 - The who-knows-who of business and government
 - <https://www.littlesis.org/>
- **Ballotpedia.org**
 - Learn more about your local/state/federal representative’s political background.
 - <https://www.ballotpedia.org/>
- **Official congressional websites of your target**
 - House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/>
 - Senate: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

Resources from our friends at Food & Water Watch on The WATER Act

- **The WATER Act, section by section**
 - Linked [here](#)
- **U.S. Water Systems Need Sustainable Funding: The Case for the Water**

Affordability, Transparency, Equity and Reliability (WATER) Act

- https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/sites/default/files/fs_1605_wateract-web.pdf