

June Action: Call Congress and Enroll Three Friends to Call Too!

In June we will each call our two Senators and one House Member about the Youth PROMISE Act, and we will each also work to enroll three other people in making those three calls!!

Note: This is June's Action, but we hope folks will also continue to do this throughout the Summer and throughout the year – encourage friends, neighbors, family, and community allies to create political will for peacebuilding through the power of relationships and communication.

Basic Steps

1. Find your Members of the U.S. House and Senate and their phone numbers:
www.peacealliance.org/congress-lookup/
2. Ascertain whether your US House and Senate Members are already co-sponsoring H.R. 1318/S.1307, so you can thank them (and urge continued support) or urge them to co-sponsor – see the list of co-sponsors at www.peacealliance.org/youth-promise-act-congressional-co-sponsors
3. Make those three calls!!! (If it's the weekend, you will likely be leaving a voicemail).
4. Make a list of five people you'd be willing to support in making these phone calls. (start with at least five possible folks – because we want success with at least three).
5. Make your Congress calls at the team meeting, and start calling friends while there too.
 - a. reach out to all these folks, and
 - i. make a request for them to make these calls.
 - ii. give them the phone numbers, and refer them to the “basic call script” below – and you can email them the second page of this Action Sheet.
 - iii. request follow-up contact with them after they've called.
 - b. Following up - get feedback about their experiences – what it was like for them.
 - c. report back to your team leader about how many folks called which offices, and what their experiences were like.
6. Bonus note: if folks you contact are super-excited about this action, they might also be interested in joining you on your team!! Werk it, peace-dawwgs!!!

Some Ways To Enroll Your Friends, Neighbors, and Other Potential Allies

- A. Ask them simply – “Would you be willing make a phone call to your three Members of Congress to support a federal bill to help reduce youth violence and incarceration?”
- B. Tell them what the Youth PROMISE Act acronym stands for: “Youth PRISON Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education.” Below there is a simple sample call script that you can either print to give or email them.
- C. Tell them this kind of advocacy is something you've been involved with for X months/years/weeks, working with a local group to develop constructive relationships with Congress and the media, and that you have found it inspiring, powerful, fun, interesting...
- D. Make arrangements for FOLLOW-UP: “would you be willing to make those three calls by this Thursday, and to call or email me after you make the calls, so we can keep track of how many calls happened?”
- E. Support them in following through. This can take different forms – a reminder email, a conversation to refresh their memory, referring them to our website...

Script for Calling Congress:

Hi, my name is _____. I'm a constituent, I live in (city, state), and I'd like to let the (Senator/Congressman/Congresswoman) know that:

- a) (if already a co-sponsor) I appreciate his/her support so far for the Youth PROMISE Act – S.1307/HB.1318, and I would like her/him to continue to champion the passage of this important bill; or
- b) (if not yet a co-sponsor) I am very much in favor of the Youth PROMISE Act – S.1307/HB.1318, and I would like her/him to give her/his full support to the passage of this important bill by becoming a co-sponsor.

That could be plenty! You could also add something about how:

- The Act will reduce youth violence and incarceration, and put at-risk youth on paths towards education and careers.
- It will use evidence-based programs chosen by local communities, programs that save money and have been proven to work.

LEAD SENATORS: It's sponsored by Senators Mary Landrieu and James Inhofe.

LEAD HOUSE MEMBERS: It's sponsored by Rep. Bobby Scott and Rep. Walter Jones.

[The above is really plenty to say, but if you'd like to share more, feel free to offer information about why this issue is important to you – as a parent, teacher, concerned citizen, someone who has experienced the effects of violence/incarceration, or from any angle – as well as examples of solutions this great bill could support – see below]

A Few Examples You Might Share:

Pennsylvania adopted a similar approach to the Youth PROMISE Act, and over a ten year period they saved \$5 for every \$1 invested.¹ Due to the shrinking number of juvenile detainees, they were able to close a 100-bed juvenile detention facility.

Within two years of implementing a Restorative Discipline program in West Philadelphia High School, incidents of assault and disorderly conduct dropped more than 65%².

After the Longmont Community Justice Partnership (in Longmont Colorado) implemented its Community Restorative Justice Program, recidivism rates among youth dropped to less than 10% in its first three years,³ compared to a rate over 50% in the surrounding Boulder County.

Any local area programs you might know about, and/or local issues that the YPA could help address.

¹ Bumbarger, Jones, et al., "The Economic return on PCCD's Investment in Research-based Programs: A Cost-Benefit Assessment of Delinquency and Prevention in Pennsylvania", The Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development, Penn State, March 2008, p. 3

http://www.prevention.psu.edu/pubs/docs/PCCD_Report2.pdf

² fixschooldiscipline.org/toolkit/educators/goodnews/

³ National Research Center's Analysis of the Longmont Community Justice Partnership 2007-2009

http://www.lcjp.org/images/stories/pdf/LCJP_2007-2009_Report_Final.pdf