



Selling the CRS to Local Officials

CRS for Community Resilience



Why engage local officials?

Mention by President

**Two factors
virtually
guarantee an
issue on the
place of the
national agenda**

**Coverage in
New York
Times**

Agenda-Setting (1996) by Rogers and Dearing

**Mention
by Official**

**What that
means for local
agendas...**

**Coverage
in Media**



The Earlier, The Better

- Give them more opportunities to be involved
- More time to feel personally-invested
- It's never too late!





Step 1: Identify interests and priorities



- What are key issues to the official you're trying to sell CRS or a specific action to?
 - Check websites that list how they have voted about certain issues
- Why are those issues important?

www.countable.us

www.opensecrets.org

www.votesmart.org



Step 2: Frame the Issue

- **Frame the activity/element so that it addresses that official's unique concerns**
- **Emphasize common ground or near-universal values**
 - **Public health and safety:** *“Our residents deserve response services during times of flooding, and we need to minimize risks to first responders.”*
- **Consensus building**
- **Protect and realize interests of all stakeholders**
 - *“We can provide recreational opportunities and space for events, while increasing flood storage capacity and removing residents from harm.”*
- **Maximize mutual benefits, transparency, trust**



Step 3: Have a “Sales Pitch”

- Lead with main points
- Clearly outline what support you need
- When it comes to messaging: less is more.
- Educate them about the issue
- Establish yourself as an expert
 - Reduce policy rates for NFIP holders
 - Enhance public safety
 - Reduce damages
 - Avoid economic disruption/losses
 - Reduce human suffering
 - Protect the environment
- Say thank you.



Step 4: Get on the Local Agenda

- **When important issues surface or when an already-troublesome issue reaches critical proportions**
- **When an external source calls attention to your issue**
- **When new information reveals or underlines a serious issue**
- **When political conditions make it easy or appropriate**



Constituents Matter Too

- **Do people know about the issue?**
- **Community can take ownership**
- **Constituents can contact local officials**
- **Highlight benefits to constituents above and beyond reduced insurance premiums**





Methods to Help Make Your Case

Source: University of Kansas Community Toolbox: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en>

- **Connect your issue to their legacy**
- **Propose “pilot programs”**
- **Tie proposal to a larger agenda or plan**
- **Conduct a public risk assessment**
- **Collaborate with a non-governmental group to make the pitch.**





Engage Other Influential People

- Every community has influential people.
- Brainstorm how you can partner with other agencies, groups, and non-profits.
- Influential people:
 - Legislative aides
 - Grassroots activists
 - Religious leaders
 - Business leaders
 - Service clubs (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, etc.)





Questions?

