



# CAP ALERT

## COMPREHENSIVE ADOVACY PROGRAM

National Federation of Republican Women

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### HOW TO IMPLEMENT A CLUB “CAP HOTLINE ACTION PLAN”

#### **WHO:**

The NFRW president initiates a national CAP Hotline to generate support or opposition for an issue that concerns the members of the Federation. The president can also initiate the Hotline in response to a request for support from a Republican congressional or administration leader or a state Federation president. A club can issue an Alert for their members on a state or local issue. It is important that Federation members be actively involved in legislation on all levels.

#### **WHAT:**

The Comprehensive Advocacy Program is based on our ability to reach thousands of Federation members quickly and effectively to generate letters, faxes, e-mails and phone calls to Members of Congress, state legislators, and/or federal or state administrative officials. It is a proven effective tool to carry the Republican message.

#### **WHEN:**

A national CAP Hotline is initiated when there is a need for massive grassroots support or opposition to influence crucial legislation before Congress and/or an action or decision of Congress or the White House. In addition, the CAP Hotline can be used to motivate Congress or the White House to address a particular issue and influence the discussion before the legislation is introduced.

#### **HOW:**

Once the decision has been made to start the Hotline, the NFRW President contacts the Executive Committee members, who contact the states in their regions, who contact the clubs, and so on – until every Federation member has been reached. This system can only be effective if each club establishes its own workable Hotline system. The following steps are proven vital to our success and should be followed carefully.

1. Appoint a Club Legislative Chairman, or someone responsible for organizing and overseeing the Hotline system and legislative activities for your club.
2. Identify the “core activists” in your club – those members who particularly enjoy contacting elected officials and can be depended upon to do so – to be contacted first on the Hotline. Then proceed with calls to ALL club members. (Having a core activist does not, however, exempt other members from responding to Hotline calls to action.)
3. A Hotline message should be kept simple and short – briefly identifying the issue, the provisions of the bill, the bill number, when a vote is expected, etc. Have each person repeat the Hotline message back to you for accuracy. This must be done for every phone call down the line. For additional clarity and further information, follow up with a fax or e-mail.

The credibility of the Federation as a lobbying force depends upon a well-informed membership. A clear message and accurate knowledge of a bill's provisions will bring respect from Members of Congress, or other targets of the Hotline.

4. When setting up your Hotline, try to provide a back-up name and phone number to the caller ahead of you. That way, if you cannot be reached within a reasonable period of time, your back-up can help keep the Hotline going. (This is particularly important for the lead members at each junction of the Hotline – i.e. regional directors, state presidents, club presidents, etc.)
5. Set up a system to periodically monitor the effectiveness of the Hotline in your area of jurisdiction. Is it working? Are the members reached quickly? Are they responding? One method might be to have the last person on the Hotline chart contact the lead person as soon as she has been called, indicating that the message has completed the Hotline course. Another method is to ask each member to record any action she takes in response to a Hotline. Then the club president or legislative chairman can compile records on total calls, letters, faxes, or e-mails from your clubs – important documentation of your effectiveness and support.

**WHY:**

As one of the largest and most influential women's political organizations in the nation, the Federation has the power and unified voice to truly impact the direction of our Congress and our Nation. It is our responsibility to ensure that we have a seat at the table as the agenda is set for the new millennium.

## **FOUR KEY ACTION STEPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE HOTLINE**

When a national Hotline has been issued, your mission is to make your voice heard on the local, state and national level.

**STEP 1**

Immediately contact the next Federation member on the Hotline list. Verify she understands the issue and knows which step to take next.

**STEP 2**

Immediately contact your representative and/or senator as instructed. Call, e-mail, fax, or write a letter ... make your voice heard!

**STEP 3**

Make your voice heard through the media. Media outlets represent perfect opportunities to reach large audiences, and your participation will generate additional support for the effort.

- Call a local radio talk show. Next call a national radio talk show (i.e., Rush Limbaugh).
- Write a letter to the editor or an opinion-editorial for your local newspaper.

**STEP 4**

Take action and use alternative methods to carry the message!

- Discuss the issue or action with your friends, colleagues and neighbors – motivate them to get involved. Show them how this issue or action will personally affect them. Each voice brings power!
- Discuss the issue at your next community meeting.

## **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

**CONTACTING THE WHITE HOUSE:**

Phone: (202) 456-1111  
Internet: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)  
Address: President of the United States of America  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**CONTACTING CONGRESS:**

Phone: (202) 224-3123 (The Capitol operator will connect you to any congressional office.)

Internet: www.house.gov  
www.senate.gov

Address: The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL MEDIA:**

**State Daily Newspaper:**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**State Radio Network:**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Newspaper:**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Radio Talk Show:**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**KEEP THIS CONTACT INFORMATION HANDY.  
DISTRIBUTE TO CLUB MEMBERS AT NEXT MEETING.**