

Political Organizer: **RAP Cheat Sheet**

INTRODUCTION

- Introduce yourself
 - ◆ Who are you?
 - ◆ Briefly state that you are there with the CWA Political Program to talk to members about the union and how it connects to what we see happening in our politics.

LISTEN!

- **No one likes to be told what they care about** - our ability to listen to what other people care about and connect that to our fight to build power will make people more likely to stay involved!
- **Be present** - don't just focus on what you want to say next but really listen to what the other person is saying.

ISSUE-EXPLANATION

Particularly when we are approaching members on the job, we don't have much time to convey a sense of urgency but also to explain the issues and what we are up against.

Thoroughly & passionately explain the issue, but try to limit your explanation to 3-4 sentences.

What is the problem?

Examples:

- Corporate America is investing millions of dollars into campaign spending and pushing other legislation to roll back hard-fought victories of the union movement.
- They are investing their money in policies that weaken our unions and deregulate our economy.
- **PRO Act example:** The *Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act* (H.R. 842/S.420) is historic legislation that will put power in the hands of workers and reverse decades of legislation meant to crush unions. The bill will completely change labor law as we know it and shift power from CEOs to workers. But passing this legislation will be tough despite our slim majority in the Senate.
 - ◆ Under the Constitution, passing a bill in the Senate takes only 51 votes. However, there is a Senate rule—never mentioned in the Constitution—that makes it harder to pass laws: the filibuster. The filibuster rule requires that at least 60 senators agree to allow a bill to be voted on at all.



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Why is this a problem?

Examples:

- Because wealthy corporations and right wing politicians use their power to pass anti-union laws, by the time we get to the bargaining table, the table has already been set. No magic negotiator can negotiate a better contract until we build real working class power in this country.
- The economy and our politics are rigged against the interests of working class people which prevents our voices from being heard in the political process.
- **PRO ACT example:** We expect the anti-worker, pro-corporate forces like the Chamber of Commerce, National Right to Work Committee, National Retail Federation, which includes Amazon, Walmart, McDonalds, and other big employers like Google will go all out against the *PRO Act* and spend billions to stop the bill.

What needs to be done to make a change?

Examples:

- Paint a picture of the union's vision for addressing these issues and (based on the listening you did) help connect the union's vision to what this individual cares about.
- Explain the role of collective action in building a powerful labor movement that can change our work, political environment and economy.
- Here is where we INSPIRE! the person to get involved.
- We have more people than they do and if people like you start getting involved, we will build power for working class people and take back this state and this country.

AGITATE

- Make sure to convey a sense of urgency and use member's values & interests to push back against objections. Don't let folks wait until tomorrow to do what they can do today!
- When we agitate we want to stir up people's emotions, not just piss people off.
- Organizers are like alarm clocks! It's our job to wake people up and get them to articulate their anger and frustration.
- We want folks to identify problems & how they affect people personally.
- Once folks have identified their values and frustrations, it's our job to paint a picture of why a failure to take action is in contrast to those values and frustrations.
- **PRO Act example:** You said that you really care about how the drop in union membership makes



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it harder for workers to have a voice on the job to fight for paid sick and family leave, especially given the recent hardships surrounding the pandemic. Protecting workers' rights to organize by enacting the *PRO Act* will help restore worker power and create more good jobs across the country.

- ◆ "Would you be willing to join our next phone bank? We know the real fight is in the Senate and we need your help to hold Senators from both parties' feet to the fire!"

ACTIVATE

- Make a direct and simple ask (e.g. sign up for the Political Action Fund or call their legislator about the *PRO Act*).
- Make sure the individual has information about the next union meeting and other opportunities to engage with their local.
- ALWAYS explain why their participation will make a difference.
- Push back on soft no's – use agitation to make sure that you get a real commitment!
- Follow up, follow up, follow up! Any time someone says they will do something we MUST follow up with them to show that their participation does matter!

WHAT YOU'RE TEMPTED TO SAY

We donate to PAF so that we can support candidates that then support us.

WHAT TO TRY INSTEAD

Contributing to PAF is about more than just electing candidates that support the union. We need champions. And it goes way beyond just candidates – we can use our PAF money to get involved in local elections around schools, health care, etc to build power for working class people on and off the job.

