

Environmental Ambassador Guide

Prepared for CTLCV Environmental Ambassadors

Created by Julianna Larue

Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

The **Connecticut League of Conservation Voters Education Fund (CTLCV Education Fund)** is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization working to educate voters and elected leaders on environmental issues in our state. The CTLCV Education Fund works with dozens of groups to develop and support good environmental policies at the state legislature, register environmentally-minded voters, promote equitable solutions to environmental problems, and support community-led efforts for climate action and energy equity.

# 1. Environmental Ambassador

1. Environmental Ambassadors are empowered individuals who address environmental issues and will help make their community better by leading and supporting projects that align with the CTLCV mission and vision.
2. Environmental Ambassadors will:

**Listen** to community members on environmental concerns in the city or town they reside in.

**Inform** their community on environmental legislation by spreading awareness and educational resources about the CTLCV mission.

**Engage** in community events like farmers markets, town discussion, coalition meetings, and any other relevant event you can foresee yourself effectively spreading CTLCV mission.

**Attend** CTLCV events and meetings when necessary.

# 4. How We Fight For What We Believe In

We are dedicated to ensuring that our families and community leaders are given the opportunity to be strong voices for the environment. Our aim is to protect our air, land, and water to protect public health in our communities for future generations.

**We Connect:** We hold regular community meetings to gather community input on intersectional issues that matter to them.

**We Support:** We support community members through seminars, training, educational materials, community events, and civic engagement.

**We Spark Action:** We educate and connect our leaders with local and state officials to allow them to express their own concerns and ideas on how our communities can protect the environment from climate change.

**We Take a Stand:** As organizers, we acknowledge that unless we demand justice, we will not achieve equity. We focus our work on ensuring that laws and regulations set by our government also address the issues relevant to the wellbeing of our communities. Communities of color and low income communities have been historically underrepresented on environmental issues. Our collective power will change this.

# 5. Expectations Of An Environmental Ambassador

1. Attend scheduled Environmental Ambassador meetings when possible.

2. Provide written or oral testimony on environmental legislation at the CT State Capital.

3. Engage with elected officials on environmental issues.

4. Spread the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters mission and vision to their communities.

5. Use all provided tabling materials when leading an event.

# 6. How Do Environmental Ambassadors Achieve Environmental Equity?

1. Practice Self-Education.
2. Elevate the Voices of Impacted Communities.
3. Hold Your Representatives Accountable.
4. Use the Power of Boycott.

# 7. Event Expectations

When an Environmental Ambassador attends an event approved by Julianna Larue or staff at CTLCV, it should be known that the ambassador will withhold all of the expectations placed by CTLCV.

These expectations include:

* Showing no political preference when at an event.
1. Having no vulgar language when speaking to interested individuals.
2. Put all materials given by CTLCV on the table.
3. Collect names and email addresses of interested individuals and send them to Julianna@ctlcv.org
4. Reuse as many materials as possible.
5. Post and share a photo of the booth and or of yourself to social media and tag CTLCV and add a hashtag saying #CTLCVEnvironmentalAmbassador.
6. Try your best to make tabling events as zero waste as possible.

# 8. Event Materials:

1. Sign up sheets with clipboards.
2. All paperwork including QR Code paper, briefing papers, and other relevant paperwork.
3. Table Cloths and Banners.
4. Stickers.
5. Buttons.
6. Metal Straws.
7. Copies of the newest Scorecard.

# 9. How To Lobby Your Legislator

1. Be prepared - Familiarize yourself with the State Legislator through an online biography and define roles (opener, note-taker, photographer, closer)
2. Outline your agenda - Let them know up-front the topics you plan to raise.
3. Making policy issues personal & relevant to your town/district
	1. Knowledge of self is key! Sharing your story and how an issue has impacted your community’s health can be far more compelling than rattling off statistics.
4. Leave behind briefing papers associated with your issue.
5. Follow up, and build that relationship. Whether or not you have more information to get to the staff. Follow up with a letter of thanks with your State Legislator or legislative staffer.
6. Building and maintaining relationships is a critical part of our ability to influence State Legislators and ensure they have the environment in mind.

# 10. GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING, WRITING, and GIVING TESTIMONY

# Giving testimony is one of the most effective ways to educate legislators and policymakers about the impact, either positive or negative, that proposed legislation or legislative change might have. Legislators and other policymakers aren’t always aware of all the implications a particular piece of legislation may have on their constituents.

1. Oral testimony is very powerful, especially when the testifier speaks directly instead of reading from their written testimony. Your testimony should be short—no longer than 3 to 5 minutes. It is most effective when you speak from your own personal experience. As a general rule, testimonies should be delivered verbally and also submitted in writing.
2. **Write your speech.** Construct an opening, well-organized paragraph, effective transitions, and a memorable closing. Pay attention to sentence structure and word choice.
3. Follow this outline for preparing your statement:

1) Identify yourself and the organization you represent (if applicable). “ My name is x. I am an Environmental Ambassador for the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.”

2) Greetings

3) Clear presentation of your position: State your position as “for” or “against” the proposed bill; identify the bill name and number.

4) Factual arguments and data as evidence to support your position, if available.

5) Personal story or anecdotes to demonstrate your position. This is often the most powerful part.

6) Conclusion: Restate/review your position at the end of your testimony 7) Thank the committee or task force for the opportunity to speak.

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