

How to
SPEAK

UP!

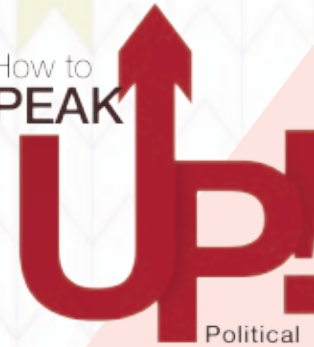
Political
Action
Book

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How to
SPEAK



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You hold in your hands a short booklet meant to inspire political action. After all, that's what we are all about: the Association for Reformed Political Action.

The ideas in the following pages come from you. They are of the grassroots, by the grassroots, for the grassroots. I compiled these ideas from over a dozen different idea generation workshops I conducted across the country. They are meant to help you and your friends be a shining light on political issues right in the communities and ridings God has placed you, for such a time as this.

I want to emphasize that these are just ideas. They are meant to be tweaked, reworked and massaged by you and your friends. Take them, and expand on them. Ask others for ways to improve them. But beware the danger of too much talking about them. Move toward action and implementation.

I am here to help. It's my full-time job to help. So feel free to reach out to me and our ARPA team and we will do our very best to assist in any way we can. I also want to hear all about your successes. So please share pictures and stories with me, and I'll share them across the country. Because your action inspires more action and for Canada, that's a very good thing.

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Goal: Reach your Politicians

- At the end of your Bible study encourage everyone to take 5 minutes and call a Senator or MP about an issue. As a group you can help each other through the call.
- Sponsor a letter writing evening to encourage your MLA/MPP to support parents as the primary educators and decision makers for their children. A workshop model where people come together to write and edit their letters can work well.
- Invite a local politician to join an ARPA chapter meeting via video conference or telephone.
- Have a large poster or picture signed by people and presented to the MP as a gift and encouragement.
- Invite an MP or MPP/MLA to speak at a local high school, your local ARPA chapter or a Bible study.
- Host a phone campaign with drafted questions on a political issue and with examples and coaching on how to direct the conversation.
- Encourage students to write short essays on a political issue to submit to government representatives.
- Find local people with unique experience on any given political issue to be a powerful voice on that issue for your local politician or in parliament. For example, find a nurse or doctor in your church, or a person with a disability, who can speak to their personal experience on the palliative care issue.
- Take a small group to your MP's or MLA/MPP's constituency office. Introduce yourselves and build rapport and name recognition with your local representative.
- Attend a municipal council meeting and introduce yourself to your councillor and thank him/her for their work.
- Give a small but thoughtful gift like hand-picked flowers from your child or a Christmas card.
- Find real stories of the negative or positive personal impact of laws in a local riding. Bring these stories to your representative.

Tiny Tip:

Always remember to be polite. Phrase your statements with grace. Remember that you are a representative of Christ.

TOP 3

Ideas to Reach Politicians

COFFEE SOCIAL:

This idea is already popular with some local ARPA groups. Host a coffee social and meet-and-greet for your MP or MLA/MPP in your home and invite all members of your congregation to come out for dessert and an informal discussion with their local representative.



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Flower DELIVERY CAMPAIGN:

Could be flowers or baking, or a fruit basket. Deliver a single flower to your local MP or MLA or mayor office. Attach a thank-you note or a letter without any organization info. Do this once per week for a few weeks. You could engage other MPs, MLAs at the same time. You could focus it just as an encouragement campaign, or attach it to a specific issue. For example, deliver flowers 10 times then at the end include your information and that the 10 gifts each represent 10,000 babies aborted in Canada each year.

PHONE CAMPAIGN:

Get a large group of people together in a church basement or home for an evening phone campaign on a political issue. Have a list of MPs or MLAs/MPPs to contact, and talking points to follow. Have your guests phone through the list, leaving phone messages of encouragement or concern regarding the issue with multiple politicians.



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Goal: Reach Reformed People

TOP 3

Ideas to Reach the Reformed Community

- Create and distribute a non-partisan election issues awareness sheet, letting others know where candidates stand on important issues.
- Call church members to update them on key issues. Could make this into a “phone tree” (one person gets a call and in turn calls four more, etc.)
- Hold a Sunday school class presentation on a specific call to action for your church.
- Invite a politician to speak to your church, school or study group.
- Collect resources/funds/supplies for a local pregnancy care center.
- Build an ARPA information bulletin board.
- Sponsor an art contest – video and write-up describing the artwork, post to ARPA website and Facebook and allow people to vote. Provide prizes.
- Conduct a reverse EasyMail campaign where the responses from MPs are shared with your church community as an encouragement.
- Sign up to be an ARPA newsletter distributor for your church.
- Encourage ARPA student clubs to present to the broader student body or to host speakers.
- Hold an open house event at a hospice or palliative care facility so that people better understand the positive benefits of palliative care.
- Host a prayer meeting for a pressing issue or for particular civil leaders, including judges and politicians.
- Volunteer with palliative care facilities, hospices and pregnancy care centres.
- Hold a t-shirt design contest, something that is educative and tasteful. Use thoughtful questions or catchy phrases (e.g. the Porn Kills Love campaign).
- Host an ARPA Canada event in your area.
- Create a weekly goal challenge for local ARPA or church members.
- Host a colouring contest for kids. All the submissions get mailed to local politicians as thank-you cards for their service.
- Joint or start an ARPA group or ARPA student club in your area.
- As an adult, volunteer to assist the student club at your local Reformed school.

Tiny Tip:

Start your political conversations with a question. Invite the person to dialogue by genuinely inquiring about how they come to their conclusions on these issues. By asking lots of questions, you can uncover assumptions and positions in an engaging way.



EASYMAIL ASSISTANTS:

Partner with your Youth Group to reach out to older church members and help them learn to use EasyMail. This can be expanded to assist with phone call campaigns and even to help with writing handwritten letters.

INFORM YOUR PASTOR:

Our pastors are very busy men! Assist them by meeting occasionally to inform them of the work ARPA does and to ask them to pray for particular items including local politicians by name, current political issues or votes, and court judgements.



VIDEO SCREENING:

Host a video screening of a relevant documentary for your church. Success stories include screening documentaries on porn, the health effects of abortion, sexual abuse and human trafficking, and euthanasia. Contact us for ideas and recommendations. And don't forget the popcorn!

Goal: Reach the Public

- Install a statistically representative hay bale and cross display, with each cross representing 100 or 1000 abortions a year.
- Set up a display of empty wheelchairs with signs indicating the human cost of legalizing assisted suicide.
- Sponsor radio ads on local stations (one idea: use a heartbeat sound that stops, and end the ad with a poignant message).
- Design a float with a positive message for a local parade and hand out tracts or small gifts.
- Sponsor large scale advertisements (billboard, bus benches, transit shelters, buses, subways, airplane banner, hot air balloon, parked transport trailers, etc.)
- Plan a letter to the editor campaign on a specific issue. Planning ahead works well: one person writes a feature op-ed, or a news story is known ahead of time, and pre-written letters to the editor that play off each other are submitted throughout a week.
- Hold a public event, inviting guest speakers, local government officials, and others to draw people from outside Reformed circles.
- Distribute postcards and infographics from WeNeedA^{LAW} in your neighbourhood.
- Have someone create a song about a political issue and upload it to YouTube.
- Host a "Carnival of Life" with kids' rides, games, baking contest, hay rides, bouncy castle, and more. Include speeches by local politicians and leaders.
- Organize a wheelchair basketball competition to help people value those with disabilities.
- Host a pro-life electric candle memorial on a spring or fall evening in a high-traffic pedestrian area.
- Sponsor merchandise (phone covers, bumper stickers, Bible covers, laptop stickers, etc.) with different positive political messages.
- Hold a charity dinner for your local pregnancy centre.
- Host a red carpet movie night featuring a good documentary on a political issue and invite local politicians and the community.

Tiny Tip:

When engaging with the public, particularly those who are biblically illiterate, look for common ground in your conversations. For example, even a non-Christian can come to understand that killing a human being is bad public policy without referencing a particular Bible text.

continued...

TOP 3

Ideas to Reach the Public

FLAG DISPLAY:

Find an open grassy place to use in your local community. With a group of volunteers, plant the blue and pink flags representing the number of abortions in Canada each year. Provide free coffee and treats for passersby to help engage in discussion. Go into the community with petitions to engage the public further.



BOOK DISPLAY:

This public display drives home the human cost of legalized assisted suicide. Old books are laid out on a public lawn representing euthanasia deaths. Personal stories can be added, where fictional or real people's stories are added to the inside cover of the old books. The number of books could match the number of euthanasia deaths in Canada last year. This could be adapted to the issue of abortion by using children's books and inserting baby names and a single sentence or two about who they were, eg. "My name is Molly, and I would have loved to dress up like a princess. Abortion ended my life before I got to dress up." Or, "My name is Sam and I would have loved to read about trucks and tractors, but abortion ended my life."



CORN MAZE

Design a corn maze after the WNAL image, with thought-provoking questions on clue boards throughout. Have volunteers with WNAL t-shirts to answer questions and engage participants. Consider a nighttime maze too with electric candles through the maze that at the end add up to represent the number of abortions in Canada. A daytime visual could be a corn kernel bin representing the number of lives lost in a year.



"Reach the **Public**" *continued...*

- Organize a Picnic in the Park event, with free food, music, games, and speeches. Hand out pamphlets and host roundtable discussions on issues.
- Speak at a local university or college, or in a public park. Topic suggestion: "where does human dignity and the value of life come from?". You could invite an atheist to participate as well. Be sure to invite the public.
- Host a pro-life sculpture competition.
- Share messages via door hangers or mailbox inserts. These can include fact sheets or infographics, condensing information to make it easier to engage.
- Buy an old vehicle or trailer and park it in different places with signage on it.
- Buy ads on YouTube. Host a contest to create the best ad.
- Sponsor a public garden with different flowers representing the number of children lost to abortion each year – each unique flower represents a unique human being.
- Hang approximately 100,000 lights in a large grove of trees with soft music playing. Invite the public to walk through the grove and consider stats on abortion. Extinguish the lights, approximately 300 at a time, representing the 300 abortions in Canada each day. End in silence and darkness.
- Organize a bike ride rally with flags and balloons with messaging to promote life or another political issue.

Besides the ideas you've read about in the preceding pages, **here are some other ideas to consider:**

- Create a play about the effects of abortion (or another issue), and invite your MP or MPP/MLA to attend.
- Design and/or distribute vehicle decals with catchy and meaningful slogans.
- Put on a 24-hour silent protest in a prominent pedestrian location on a free-speech issue (e.g. bubble zone)
- Work with your municipality to install a fundamental freedoms crosswalk (contact ARPA for a template).
- Sponsor an airplane banner with a thought-provoking message.
- Run an awareness campaign over nine months that indicates fetal development facts each week, and also how many children are eliminated at that stage by abortion in Canada.
- Organize a poster campaign along a stretch of road with three or more posters saying parts of one provocative message.

LESSON PLANS

ARPA Canada has developed quality lesson plans for high school students. The collection of over 70 documents on a dozen different issues is freely available to Christian high school teachers and home schoolers. Get the word out! And if you want to help by expanding those lesson plans by either making them accessible to younger grades or adding issues to the collection, please contact our team.



LEGISLATURE VISITS

Get a church group together to go to the provincial legislature to meet with MLAs/MPPs. Combine it with a provincial ARPA conference in your capital for a day of meetings with officials, speeches, and lobbying. Provincial politics sometimes fly under our radar, but provincial laws have greater impacts on parental rights, education law, religious freedom and human rights legislation than federal laws do.



GOD & GOVERNMENT & FALL TOURS

Each year, ARPA Canada hosts two signature events: a God & Government conference in the spring (alternating between a student conference and a regular conference) and a speaking tour in the fall. Even if you can't help with any of the grassroots ideas listed in this booklet, please do come out to our conferences and tours to be educated on important political developments.

God and GOVERNMENT
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We hope we can inspire you to **ACTION!**