

**We marched! Now what?
A Guide To Staying Involved**

**Portland Friends Meeting Peace and Social Concerns Committee
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It may appear completely overwhelming to know that we must keep working in the face of such a deluge from the new administration. But we don't have to fight everything. We only have to pick a few things, do them well, and be tireless in their pursuit. The work we need to do falls broadly into three categories: actively resisting the efforts of the current administration and its allies, pushing our current members of congress oppose the administration's agenda, and replacing those politicians who do not with those who have a progressive and just vision of the future. Basically, we need to stand up for our values now in the streets and in the courts, in the halls of Congress, and in the future through the ballot box.

Here are some ways to get involved that fit those three main categories, which for these purposes we will call Resistance, Advocacy, and Organizing both on a national scale and in Maine.

This Guide is not an official publication of Portland Friends Meeting, but rather of its Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Ultimately, just pick a group or two and get engaged. Start volunteering. There are always a wide range of tasks to be done, from knocking on doors, to making phone calls, to entering data, to going to rallies and marches, to doing sit in and other more subversive direct actions. Or just fundraising can be helpful. The most important bit is to pick a task, don't back down, and remember to take care of yourself. Taking care of yourself includes laughing, praying, singing, napping, and being with loved ones.

Resistance:

National:

1. [American Civil Liberties Union](http://www.aclu.org) (ACLU) (www.aclu.org)
2. [Cosecha](http://www.lahuelga.com) (www.lahuelga.com)
3. [Black Lives Matter](http://www.blacklivesmatter.com) (BLM) (www.blacklivesmatter.com)

Maine:

1. [Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project](http://www.ilapmaine.org) (ILAP)(www.ilapmaine.org)
2. [Showing Up for Racial Justice](http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org) (SURJ)(www.showingupforracialjustice.org)
3. [Peace Action Maine](http://www.peacactionme.org) (www.peacactionme.org)

The first thing we must do is resist. If we sit back and wait for the next elections, they will be stolen from us and the damage done in the meantime will be catastrophic. We must be sand in the gears. This means marching, protesting, strikes, and civil disobedience of all colors. There is now increasing risk of violence or incarceration at such actions, so it is best to be prepared. Trainings and affinity groups are a good way to become prepared to participate in such an action, but even those who are not prepared to put themselves at risk can have a

role to play, as those who are at risk may need support both at and not present at the disobedience event.

Advocacy:

1. [Indivisible](http://www.indivisibleguide.com) (www.indivisibleguide.com)
2. [Friends Committee on National Legislation](http://www.fcnl.org) (FCNL) (www.fcnl.org)
3. [Women's March](http://www.womensmarch.com) (www.womensmarch.com)
4. [Town Hall Project 2018](#) (google search "Town Hall Project 2018" for google doc)

Advocacy organizations are focused on putting immense political pressure on current politicians. This is where the approaches detailed below come into play. Don't just do it by yourself though; your work will be more powerful if you are amplifying the work of a small group or larger organization. Speaking while representing many people gives your voice more force. Read the Indivisible Guide before developing a strategy on how to most effectively pester your congress person.

Organizing:

National:

1. [Knock Every Door](http://www.knockeverydoor.org) (www.knockeverydoor.org)
2. [Sister District Project](http://www.sisterdistrict.com) (www.sisterdistrict.com)
3. [Our Revolution](http://www.ourrevolution.com) (www.ourrevolution.com)

Maine:

1. [Maine Peoples Alliance](http://www.mainepeoplesalliance.org) (www.mainepeoplesalliance.org)

Proactive organizing is focused on 2018, 2019, 2020, getting back Congress and then the presidency. We have to look forward and offer a positive and hopeful vision. The groups above are national groups but are focused locally. The Koch brothers and evangelical organizations have funneled money and manpower into local races all across the country. We need to counter this with money and grassroots organizing of our own. Statehouses are where redistricting happens, where state policy is made, and where national politicians get their start. We have ignored this level of politics and this is where it has brought us.

What has an impact on members of Congress in order of effectiveness:

1. **Show up at one of their events** and ask them why they did or didn't vote for something or how they plan to vote on something in front of the media. In order to keep track of where they might be, get on their mailing list and follow them on social media.
2. **Visit their office** as a representative of a group, along with several other representatives. Do this periodically to build credibility and keep focus on your issues. Lobby visits are easier than you think they are. Guidance materials can be found [here](#) (www.fcnl.org/updates/how-to-lobby-congress-19).

3. **Write a letter to the editor** to a local newspaper and name drop the elected official you hope to influence. They have staff people watching their public image and reading LTE's is a big part of their job. The lite version of this is to post on Facebook or Twitter and both mention them tag them in the post or tweet. Guidance for how to write an effective letter to the editor is [here](http://www.fcnl.org/updates/publish-letters-to-the-editor-18) (www.fcnl.org/updates/publish-letters-to-the-editor-18).

4. **Call your Congressperson's office.** You will speak to a staff person or leave a message. They tend to actually listen when you thank the Congressperson for something specific they've done in the past before you go on to make a request or a criticism. Always ask for a follow up or else you will just be a tick mark as they count support for a position among their constituents. If you can, identify yourself as part of a group to give the impression that your position is shared by a specific group of people.

a. Many have now been letting their voicemail fill up and are not emptying them. They have many offices. Just move down the list and say that you were unable to get through in your own district office.

b. Calling to support their position is also effective. They often only receive angry phone calls and can develop a sense that the public is against their position if people don't voice support as well.

5. **Write a letter or an e-mail.** Letters are better because they cannot simply be deleted at the click of a button. Faxes work too and are another good way to jam all of their lines around an issue.

6. **Sign a petition.** There are few reasons to do this anymore. This is mission critical. The time for petitions has passed. You can do it if you want, but don't let it take away from the real work.

For FNCL's guidance on being heard by your member of congress, go [here](http://www.fcnl.org/updates/5-ways-to-make-congress-hear-you-458) (www.fcnl.org/updates/5-ways-to-make-congress-hear-you-458).

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