

## Phone Bank Toolkit

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### Introduction to Phone Banking

Phone banking is a great way to engage in advocacy with large groups or in coordination with others. Phone banking can be done with many people in a single space or separately, but is most impactful when legislators are receiving many calls about the same issue in a short period of time.

#### Advantages

- Allows you to hear a response back from your legislators
- Can leave a message if you don't want to speak with someone directly
- Calls and messages can be appropriately timed for important actions
- Can be performed in coordination with others in your district

#### Limitations

- You are unable to provide additional materials during a phone call

### Materials Needed

- Phones/Cell phones
- Volunteers
- Script
- Phone numbers for legislators being called
- Paper to record responses from legislators
- Space for phoning
- Clear information about issues

### Elements of a Script

*Introducing yourself* – let the legislator know that you live in their district and are connected to other voters in the community

*Make a clear ask* – share as many specifics about the issue as you can, particularly the bill number, and what your desired outcome on the issue is

*Outlet for a response* – ask the legislator if they already have an established position on the issue and record this information, then let the legislator know that you will be in touch with JRLC and other members of your community

### Sample Script

*“Hello. My name is Sharise and I live in District 47 at 123 Main St. in Chaska. I am a member of the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, a congregant at St. Luke’s Presbyterian Church, and a member of the Lion’s Club here.*

*I strongly support bonding for affordable housing and want to make sure there is at least \$110M in bonding for new affordable housing and \$30M in bonding to maintain existing investments.*

*Will you commit to ensuring there is \$140M in bonding committed to affordable housing during the 2018 legislative session? I’ll be sharing your answer with my friends here in Chaska.*

*Thank you for your time.”*

## **Description of Materials**

*Phones:* Be clear with volunteers about whether they should provide their own phones when phone banking. If this is the case, try to secure one or two extra phones for members of your group who may not own a cell phone or who may pay by the minute for cell phone service.

*Volunteer Callers:* There are certain instances when volunteers would be most effective if they live in a specific legislative district. If this is the case, JRLC will notify you, but you can find detailed information about legislative districts here <https://www.gis.leg.mn/php/house.php?Report=HouseMCD&District=>

*Script:* Have a fixed script available for callers that feel uncomfortable calling their legislators, but encourage folks to vary their message or alter the script. This shows legislators that each caller is truly invested in the issue and not just reading from a piece of paper.

*Phone numbers:* Contact information for legislators can be found in advance at [gis.leg.mn](http://gis.leg.mn). Encourage people to enter these numbers into their phone’s contact list so that they can call their legislators from anywhere in the future.

*Paper to record responses:* Knowing if legislators do or do not support specific legislation and understanding why they do or do not support it is helpful information for JRLC when we are creating statewide strategies for issues. Stay in touch with us!

*Space:* The space can be flexible. Callers could gather at a community center, a place of worship, a home, or another quiet place with sufficient cell or landline phone service. Volunteers might even call from home if they are already acquainted with the issues.

*Clear information about issues:* Information will always be available at [jrlc.org](http://jrlc.org), though if you do not see something that you are looking for, you can contact us at 612-230-3200 or [info@jrlc.org](mailto:info@jrlc.org). Make extra information about the issues available for volunteers to share with others or to take home with them.