

The ACLU Suggestions for Campaign

How to Pass a Resolution on Your Campus

1. Contact the ACLU

- Your local ACLU affiliate will inform you of any pending resolution activity and how you can get involved. You can locate your state affiliate online at www.aclu.org (scroll down to the “In the States” section).
- The national ACLU office has hired a full-time field team to support local efforts in passing resolutions. For detailed information on promoting a resolution on your campus or in your community go to the Resolutions section at www.aclu.org/resolutions.
- Look over the ACLU draft resolution and discuss it with your ACLU contact. Consider which provisions are particularly important in your community. To obtain a copy of the ACLU draft resolution online go to the Resolutions section at www.aclu.org/resolutions.

2. Build a Coalition:

- The American Library Association has been very active in providing information about how the USA PATRIOT Act authorizes seizure of book records and Internet use. Go to their web site at www.ala.org/ESPY. Identify organizations and faculty on your campus and in your community that you think may wish to work on the resolution effort. Key faculty members will be crucial allies in understanding the current situation on and developing an effective strategy for your campus. Look for faculty who teach about civil liberties or social justice. Don't forget, when you are building your coalition, think about organizations on and off campus, organizations like social justice organizations, minority organizations, organizations of foreign students, and any pro-privacy organizations in your community.
- Send a letter to the organizations that you feel may be interested in working on this project. Remember to include the your draft resolution with your letter as a starting point for your discussion. To obtain a copy of the draft resolution online go to www.ala.org???

TIP: The coalition you assemble should be balanced and representative of the diversity in your community. Remember that those who may not share your views on other issues can be important allies in this effort, so reach out broadly. Remember that having other organizations' and activists' support for binding language will be essential if you want a strong resolution to be passed. And know that building a strong, broad grassroots coalition will create a lasting defense against civil liberty abuses in your community.

3. Know Your Campus

- Understand your local administration and how decisions are made. In particular, you need to know what powers the Faculty Senate and Student Council has with regard to making campus policy and through which mechanisms your campus is governed.
- Collect information about the members of the body (be it Faculty Senate, Student Council, etc). Get informed about who is most concerned about your issues and may be willing to support, if not sponsor, the resolution. Also, figure out what people or groups have leverage over council members who may not initially lend support for the resolution.

TIP: Know the politics. Is there any one person who could make or break your efforts?

- With the Academic draft resolution in mind, consider what organizations and activists in your community may be particularly interested in joining the resolution effort.

4. Host an Organizing Meeting:

- Having discussed the initiative individually with some of your key organizational partners, you should convene a coalition meeting to discuss this project as a group.

- Establish roles and responsibilities for leadership.
- Review and discuss the provisions of the USA Patriot Act that can adversely affect your community.
- Draft a resolution that reflects the priorities of your community. While you could use the Academic draft resolution as a starting point, you should be ready to add and subtract from the draft in order to meet the needs of coalition partners critical to your success. The resolution should be both legally binding and representative of the diverse interests within your community.

TIP: You may want to involve sympathetic Council members in the drafting process.

5. Build Public Awareness

- Devise a public education strategy. Some suggested methods are to draft an op-ed piece in the campus newspaper, or encourage student allies to set-up information tables in public places. You could also organize 'teach-ins' with your members and/or forums with the general public invited (often, you can find some faculty members who may have written books on these types of issues, etc.). Any information given to the public needs to be accurate and concise. Note: Be sure to invite members of your Administration and the governing body you hope to pass the resolution (Faculty Senate, Board of Trustees, Student Council, etc.)—the more they know about the issue, the more willing many will be to vote for a resolution.

6. Implement a Strategy for Passing the Resolution

- Get key members from your coalition to schedule a meeting with the President of your College or University. Refer to the memo regarding the USA PATRIOT Act issues on campuses before you go. Ask what your college or university policy is regarding turning over student records to the FBI, INS, and law enforcement officials, if there are any members of the Campus police who are participating in the Joint-Terrorism task force, how your campus is dealing with the requirement to turn over information on international students, and what your policy is on academic freedom—have any students on your campus been forced to give up a dissertation because of “national security issues”?
- Schedule informal meeting(s) with members of the governing body. Present evidence of public support to them. Identify most persuasive or best situated council member(s) to introduce the resolution.
- Have influential people or groups call or visit members that need to be moved to support the resolution.

TIP: Members of the coalition should be prepared to attend meetings of the governing body and testify publicly on behalf of the resolution. And remember to keep your campus newspaper informed about your activities, about votes and certainly about your success!

Passing a resolution is only the beginning; early successes should be capitalized upon in the media and in the community.