

An Impeachment Resolution? Cool!

Can it be done in my town?

Yes it can. And you can do it. One of the most remarkable things about this movement is that there are people everywhere – even where you least expect it – who are just as convinced as you are that something has to be done. Yes, even Republicans.

Even better, resolutions like this can make the news and move the ball forward even if they fail. So just by gathering the courage to speak up and make yourself heard, you're doing something to move us closer to that tipping point where it's no longer feasible for our elected officials *not* to hold the president accountable for his actions.

How can I do it?

Most of us are not fortunate enough to enjoy the “town meeting” form of local governance, as is the case in much of New England, where citizens actually gather to decide town business and vote on the issues directly. Still, most municipalities either permit citizens to bring resolutions of their own with sufficient advance notice, or have mechanisms for citizens to request that sympathetic elected members of local governing bodies bring them instead. The clerk of your local governing body (or an elected member) can tell you how things work in your locality.

The truth is that a resolution *can* be brought by just one person, working with a cooperative city council member. But if you're not “connected,” how do you find a cooperative member? The good news is that hundreds, even thousands of local activists before you have discovered that sometimes all it takes is calling or writing to ask for their help. Local government is often the most responsive to inquiries, being closer to their constituents, and in most cases, less frequently approached with such requests. The easier you make for them to accommodate you, the better your chances of success. You should have a draft resolution prepared that you can share with them, to show them exactly what you're asking them to do.

I'm not a lawyer or a politician. How can I write a resolution?

Need help putting together an actual resolution? Don't know what to put in it, or what “magic words” to use? Start here:

<http://impeachbush.tv/impeach/bystate.html>

We've collected the text of several resolutions, offered in cities and towns across the country. We haven't met an impeachment activist yet who minded having his or her resolution used as a model, or even copied wholesale. (Just remember to change the name of the city, of course!)

Gathering Support

While it takes just one person to get the ball rolling, in order to increase the likelihood that a member will help you, and the likelihood that the measure will actually pass, you'll want to have others on board. Gather support for your resolution, and let your friendly council member know you're doing it. Sometimes, all it takes is lining up a few friends to stand up and speak during public comment sessions of your local government's meetings. For a measure as important (and as controversial) as impeachment, of course, the more support you can offer, the better. Not so much in terms of the numbers of speakers at the meeting, but in terms of demonstrating to your friendly council member that you're serious, organized, and speak for a lot of voters.

Ask friends, family, neighbors, co-workers whom you think would be interested, and ask them each to do the same. You'd be surprised how far your personal network can reach when the people you know reach out to the people they know. Letters, e-mails, faxes, petitions, etc. are all effective methods of letting your local officials gauge the popularity of what you're proposing.

But I'm not good at public speaking.

Maybe you don't think of yourself as a public speaker. Maybe you think you'd be too nervous to get up and speak in front of a crowd, even about something you're passionate about. Keep this helpful tip in mind: most everyone feels the same way. Don't worry about it. Let them see that you're nervous. Not only is it OK (and perfectly understandable), it can even inspire others in the audience to realize that anyone really *can* stand up and be heard.

Me? A "leader." Yes, you!

Maybe you don't think of yourself as a leader. Maybe you have no idea why a council member would answer your e-mail, take your phone call, or even consider your resolution. Well, Woody Allen nailed this one when he said, "Ninety percent of life is just showing up." The truth is, just being willing to pick up the phone or send an e-mail makes you a pretty rare breed as it is. And as strange as it seems, even though you may not be able to think of any reason why your local elected officials would feel the need to listen to you (much less help you out), just remember what it's like on the other end of the phone. If you're serious and organized, they won't be able to tell the difference between you and any of the "connected" citizens they've listened to in their careers. Elected officials want to stay connected to influential people, because that's where the votes are. And if you've gathered support for your resolution, that's just what you are – an influential person. A leader. And you didn't even know it!

So, lead on!