When You Should Say Something

More Thoughts on How to Take Action

It is hardly a stretch to say that American culture is losing its way. Children today are faced with issues our parents and grandparents could hardly have imagined.

A new "Faith in America" survey conducted by the Marist College Poll released in March 2022 finds that Americans are deeply concerned about the moral direction of our nation. A large majority, (72%), think the nation's moral compass is pointed in the wrong direction.

Yet our cultural signposts of entertainment, media, politics, sports, academia, business and even many churches seem to continue down the path of moral relativism or even outright evil.

What do we do? Pro-family, Hoosiers who hold to the traditional values that uphold society must speak up. A majority of people may think America is morally confused, but if no one says any thing, changing direction won't happen.

Where Do I Start?

✍️ When an issue concerns you, the first step is to get the facts straight. Few things can hurt your cause more than to talk to an elected official, a person in authority, or other concerned activists using false information. This doesn't mean you have to know everything about an issue, rather that what you do know is accurate.

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If you are not sure, you can ask questions of your elected representative. For example, "I've heard that the school board is considering [this]. Is that true?"

We must check our emotions in order to be persuasive and respectful. Getting angry at a legislator you call will not help your cause and may drive the representative in the wrong direction. Politicians, like all people, should be treated with dignity.

Speaking of emotions, we should note that while facts and data are important, in a postmodern culture, where truth is relative, real stories and actual experiences can also be very persuasive. Liberals have often excelled in advancing their causes on the emotional pull of compassion or by playing the victim rather than using facts and data. If you have a personal story of how an issue or policy may impact you feel free to share it, briefly.

How Am I Heard?

✍️ If you say something because you finally get a hold of someone and you feel "someone needs to say this," ask yourself "Is this what they need to hear, or just what I want to say?" *Contacting those in a position of power is about persuading them, not merely getting something off your chest.*

Who Do I Contact?

✍️ Several Internet sites can help you find your elected officials. Your school web site, city government web site, and the Indiana General Assembly page (www.in.gov/legislative) can locate your local, state and even your federal officials at the "find your legislator" on the IGA page. Another source is: www. ballotpedia.org/who_represents_me

Obviously, you should contact local officials about local matters, and state officials about state matters, and federal leaders about national issues. Many officials have staff specifically to take record of, and respond to, concerns from those they represent.

Corporations have complaint or customer service departments too. There's nothing wrong with complaining about an offensive or inappropriate advertisement.

What Method is Most Effective?

✍ In many cases a face to face discussion with a business or political leader is not convenient even though it may be the most effective. In that case, telephone calls and letters are the most effective.

Email is less effective, and may be filtered or blocked. However, it is the easiest and should still be used. In any method, keep it short and to the point with a request of them to vote a certain way, change a policy, etc.

It is not often necessary to talk directly to an elected or business leader. Talking with a staff member, or leaving a message, is also very effective.

If you do meet with an elected leader, send an email or letter follow-up to them as soon as possible, thanking them for for meeting with you. Very briefly summarize the points you made.

Act Quickly

✍ Legislative action often moves quickly. The best time to contact your elected official is when you first hear about the issue.

Social Media Isn't Enough !

✍ *Facebook* and *Twitter* are helpful communication tools, but they have significant limitations. They are not a replacement for direct contact with elected leaders. Social media may help spread the word about an issue to others, but think of it like screaming to a friend in a stadium full of people during a concert. Social media is a crowded arena full of a lot of noise.

How to Win

✍ The key to winning a battle involving a vote, an advertisement, or a policy is reaching other like-minded people who will contact their elected leader or business about your issue of concern. **There is strength in numbers**. One phone call to a city councilor may not have an impact, but ten calls, all on the same day, probably will.

Say Thank You

✍ Elected officials rarely hear "thank you." Let your elected official know you appreciated his/her favorable vote.