



## MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD *in* TOWN HALLS

During the August recess many members of Congress host Town Hall Meetings in their district. Open to the public, these meetings are a chance for members to hear directly from their constituents about the key issues before Congress. This August, the humanitarian crisis at the southern border and unaccompanied immigrant children are likely to be a frequently discussed topic, as is immigration reform. Anti-immigrant groups will be present to make their case and we need to make sure that our elected officials hear LOUD and CLEAR that we, as Episcopalians, want to see a response to these children driven by compassion, and an immigration system that is just and humane. By asking questions about the treatment of children, or the reunification of families, we communicate with our elected officials about the values we share as a community, and the role we have to play as people of faith. The August recess is so important precisely because of these moments where the electorate has the chance to change a representative's or senator's mind on an issue.

### *Follow these easy steps to get involved:*

1. Call your Representative to ask when and where their Town Halls will be held.
2. Invite other community members who care about unaccompanied children and or/ immigration reform to attend with you. Make signs, wear t-shirts, and find creative ways to visually display that you are a person of faith who supports immigration reform.
3. Get there early and sit near microphones. Don't all sit together – it will help show that there is not just one group that supports compassionate immigration policies, but many from all over the community.
4. Prepare your question(s) ahead of time and write them down, in case they only take written questions. Have one or two key facts at your fingertips and include them when you ask your questions, along with a story about why you care or of someone who is impacted in your community. It can be tempting to want to cover every aspect of immigration reform or try and rebut other questions that have been raised, but keep the message clear, concise, and consistent. You can always follow-up with the office after the Town Hall.



JUSTICE *and* ADVOCACY MINISTRIES

5. Raise your hand to ask a question and keep your hand up until they give you time to speak. Remain polite but speak loudly and do not allow others to interrupt you if your question is taken. Find a way to be heard by cheering for others' questions, making a lot of noise in order for them to give you time to speak, and talking with the representative or their staff afterwards, and reemphasizing your point.

If you would like additional background materials, information on your representative's stance, or assistance formulating questions, please contact [kconway@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:kconway@episcopalchurch.org).