August 2017

RESULTS Global Poverty National Webinar

Candidate Engagement

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\*Live captioning transcript – errors inherent\*

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[Multiple conversations.]

Ken Patterson: I went ahead and muted everyone here. We will get started soon. We will wait 'til Joann joins us. I will text her.

Oh, she is on by phone. Okay.

Jos Lin: She wouldn't be doing it with the San Francisco folks, would she?

Jos Lin: We will get started shortly, folks.

Ken Patterson: Hi, Joann!

Dr Joanne Cox: Hello!

Jos Lin: I will go ahead and start the recording. Are we all set? We will share the screen.

I think we are good to go.

Dr Joanne Cox: Welcome to the August Grassroots National Webinar. I am on by phone.

This month's webinar is particularly special. It brings our whole community together. I know many of you are working together all the time. A number of you have created joint focused groups. It is great to be together and strategize on how to most powerfully take advantage of this election season.

Today we will be focusing on how we can put our issues in front of candidates, how to raise public and private support, how to connect with candidates across political spectrum before election day. There is such a turnover. We have a chance to forge relationships before election day that will be critical after election day.

Before we jump into things, I want to say how inspiring it was to be with many of you in July at the National Results conference in Washington DC. We had 470 attendees. That included 191 people who attended for the first time. We have a great new class of 75 new leaders. We had all 50 states represented and 25 countries represented. You organized over 300 lobby meetings that included over 100 face to face meetings with representatives. Our international partners had dozen high level meetings at the world bank.

The international conference is for hearing from permanent allies and training and advancing our issues and relationships with members of congress and their staff. We wanted to take a few minutes to hear about your experiences at conference and what you have learned and taken back from that work.

I want to invite David Cook from Arkansas to share some experiences.

David Cook: I was one of the first time attendees to Results. I was able to organize meetings with all six of Arkansas' delegation. We were able to meet with both of our senators and all four of our congressmen. Going into the conference I did not know what to expect. I was excited about the work on domestic poverty issues and global poverty issues.

One of our meetings was scheduled with Senator Cotton. Going into the meeting and preparing for it I was nervous. I had met with his office for other issues and never got very far. Tamara Bates was with me from Arkansas. Mia was with us as well and we said that we were getting the worst of the meetings over with.

I read over the material that Results had gave me. The preparation and information we had as far as talking points and how to prepare for lobby meetings was in depth and amazing. Several staff members sat with me and discussed strategy with me.

As we had the meeting, I met with two of his staffers. He was very busy through the day. It just so happened they were going to have a discussion that afternoon regarding foreign aid and issues that went along with what Results was trying to achieve with the REACH Act. We had a good conversation with his staff and related the REACH Act to how it brought stability to certain regions. We related it to the military as well.

Joe Crystal, one of his staff members shared some more about Cotton. He was very impressed with what the REACH Act promised and some of the tools it had. He liked the global relief and accountability on the back end. The analysis on the back end of it as well was important. I left not expecting much and then one of the things we had asked was whether there was an opportunity to have a face to face or photo opportunity later on in the afternoon. They said to come back later on for a photo opportunity.

That was my chance to get a face to face with Senator Cotton. We went through the rest of our lobby meetings. Two of our congressmen were already cosponsors of the REACH Act. Overall I had great experiences with delegation. It was a first for me. Prior meetings with delegation had not always gone smooth for me due to the issues I was working on. This is a bipartisan issue and everyone cares about poverty and how to ease suffering to those in poverty.

As the day progressed, I went back to Senator Cotton's office and met with Ed and Joe one more time. We were not able to get the photo opportunity but a member of his staff and shared with us that they appreciated us stopping by and bringing the REACH Act to their attention. It had not been on their radar prior to that. He told me that Senator Cotton had agreed to sign on as a cosponsor. It was overwhelming and emotional. It meant that the meeting I had that morning added his sponsorship and it made my voice have power and influence. It was a big win since we got him on board. Past that it has been an opportunity to have a deeper relationship with his staff on this part. He retweeted it on Twitter and reaffirmed with that ask. He thanked us again.

That was my life changing experience. It opened up doors for other congressmen as well.

Dr Joanne Cox: That is really inspiring. You did great work. The work that led up to it - your openness about having challenging times before as well as the followup is very inspiring. I want to ask Jonathan Cole from Kansas to share your experience. Are you on the line?

Jonathan Cole: I got involved with Results recently. Garrett Wilkinson had been involved with Results reached out to me and told me that Senator Murray was coming to our campus to surprise one of the professors. They wanted to talk to him about another bill. They said I should join them. I did. We ambushed Moran and talked to him that if he was going to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a solid replacement that it would result in preventable deaths. That was my start with that. The people involved at K State said I should do the Real Change fellowship. Going to DC was so empowering. It lifted the veil on how to work with elected officials. The work itself is hard but building the relationship process is easy. I am glad I went to DC.

I plan on engaging on the federal level and on our state levels. I met with an Affordable Housing group yesterday and we talked about how we could get the political capital built around safe housing and be patented across the state. There will be great things we will be doing here in Kansas.

Dr Joanne Cox: I have no doubt of that Jonathan. It is great to have you a part of this. It is great to have your deep engagement and your passion.

If you will pull up the next slide, I want to say briefly that as we move around our strategy, it is all a part of our year long strategy to get our key issues out in front of members of congress and candidates and strengthen our relationship with offices. We started with our letter campaign. We reached out and wrote letters to congress. We demonstrated the breadth of support that we have in our community. Many of you were at the international conference. That is where some of those letters were delivered personally. There was a strong push to support our bills and housing. In building though relationships and strengthening them, it is very important.

As we move into the candidate engagement strategy, the focus of our call, I want to say a few things. Right now I want to strongly push you to keep pushing for August recess meetings. It is a key part in making sure our issues are election priorities. We want the United States to show up in a meaningful way as a champion for tuberculosis. As we move into the election season and candidate engagement, remember we will be seeing a huge turnover in congress.

There will be more than 90 open seats. The importance of making new champions is vital. Think about the other people you are meeting in this process. Think of the folks that will be working in campaigns. Start building now to make the case for the election day and the beginning of the process of constituency. We want to make sure our issues are prioritized.

Now I will turn the car over to Carlie.

Carly Pildris: Hello! Thanks for having me on the call. I am so excited to be here.

Candidate engagement training! I love engaging candidates. Who does congress work for? They yell US! They work for us. Right now policy makers and people who want to become policy makers are asking things of us. They are asking for our votes, our volunteer hours, our money. This is a great time to be engaging and making those relationships. Over 90 open house seats and 7 open senate seats. That means an enormous number of new members of congress who have not heard of our issues at all. There are over 90 open House seats and over 7 open Senate seats.

We want you to start thinking of how you can engage the new members of Congress and the Senate right now.

I want to start with some sample questions. The first is the REACH Act.

Hello, my name is Carlie and I am a RESULTS volunteer from Boston. One of the things I am really passionate about is maternal and child health. Thanks to the United States leadership, the number of children who die each year before the age of five has been cut in half by 1990. But there are still 5.9 million kids a year dying of mostly preventable and treatable causes before their 5th birthday.

Our next question is as follows . . . [On screen.]

#2 Tuberculosis.

Next please.

Those are both for current members of congress. For new candidates we will be focusing on the Global Fund. New members may have never heard of the global fund and we want them to hear about it from constituents while they are still running and courting you and your vote.

The senate TB letters are still open.

The Senate TB letter is expected to close August 21xt.

[Carlie reading [On screen.] #3 Global Fund

Next please.

On the United States side we are talking about SNAP.

[Carlie reading [On screen.]

[On screen.]

For candidates you will say if elected well you work to strengthen SNAP and oppose efforts to take it away?

Next slide.

We can take a minute and glance over the question on the Housing and Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.

This gives you a sense of that next United States poverty question.

Next please?

This should be familiar to all of you and it is focusing on tax policy. I will skip down to the ask question in the second paragraph. [On screen.]

There is a big picture on what will be on our website. Throughout this whole campaign season, I am here to support all of you. If you go to the campaigns, there is an election 2018 dropdown. You can sign up to engage candidates. You will get a friendly note from me. I would love to be helpful with you. We can talk about what is happening in your local elections and do some community mapping and figure out which questions would be appropriate. I can help strategize. The situation can be different depending on what is going on with your races.

How do I find candidates? Set up for notifications on their campaign site. Call your local campaign offices and local party headquarters and ask when you can hear candidates speak. They will be happy to tell you. You can follow candidates on facebook and twitter. Sign up to engage candidates and RESULTS staff like me will be on the lookout. Townhallprojct.com is generally current members of congress and it can still be really helpful.

Research the candidate and find out how you can find common ground with them. Use our handy new election mapping worksheet to help you leverage power as effectively as possible. Invite new people to attend. Town hall actions are fun and exciting. They are high adrenaline. They are a great thing to engage new people in. Talk to me. I would love to help you do this and provide some more personalized coaching.

Here are some town hall tips. Arrive early. Ask for extra campaign paraphernalia. Split up if you are in a big group. Try to sit by an aisle. Think about where it is easy for the candidate that is speaking to call on me and get a microphone too. Wear brought colors that could easily be described by a candidate who is calling on you without knowing your name. Cheer during the speech, especially during parts that don't often get the most applause. Candidates are looking for softball questions and positive interactions. The room is full of press. They will call on someone who looks like they are likely to ask an easy question or be friendly to them.

Raise your hand first, fast, and high. Has everyone seen Harry Potter? Raise your hand like Hermine. First, fast, and high. If called on, say who you are, why you care and ask a yes or no question. Keep it brief and make sure you mention you are a RESULTS volunteer. If you don't get called on, that is fine. Go through the shaking hand line. I don't let go of their hand until they have given me a yes or no. A lot of people have asked what the difference between a town hall and a meet and greet. They are similar. There is not a formal Q/A at a meet and great. It is an informal chance to meet candidates.

Approach the candidate, shake their hand and ask a question. Make sure you say your name and that you are a RESULTS volunteer. You have asked your question. You probably got a "Maybe." You may have gotten a "Yes" if you are lucky. You are not done yet. One of the great things about these events is that they are *community events.*  Introduce yourself to campaign staff. There is a good chance some of them will be working in Washington one day. Tell them who you are and tell them if you are part of the group that the campaigner is talking about a lot. Ask them if they would like to meet and talk more about the issue. Chat with potential volunteers. Often times people will come up to you and ask about RESULTS. They may be asking you questions about some of the issues. Ask if they would like to come to an event with you. It is a great way to involve people in your community.

Introduce yourself to local members of the media. First, definitely introduce yourself to members of local media and campaign events that will often be there. If they are a member of national media, it is nice to meet them but less purposeful for us. Tell them if you are local. Engage with them on the issues. Talk to them about the question you asked and why you care about it. Tell them you would love to provide expert speakers if they are interested in the issue.

When you get home, write an LTE about the event and your experience talking to the candidate. When you send it in, mention the reporters you met and how you appreciate their work. After you send your LTE, make sure you report. If you go to the campaigns tab you will see a report to interact with candidates. If they are sitting encumbants it will give them a chance to receive election engagement.

A few cautions in talking to the media during elections. Many reporters are covering particular candidates for weeks or months at a time. They are looking for a story. It does not matter if the story is partisan. You are looking to remain non partisan. Keep your comments non partisan and Results focused. Do not comment on negatively or positively on the size of the event. Do not be negative about the campaign at all. They might not want to engage with you in the future. It is really easy to do particularly if you are talking about how the event itself is going. That is one caution.

Elections as a group building tool. Again, I think engaging with candidates is really fun and exciting. It can be a great way to bring in new people. Who in your community is always saying they want to do something like that but they are always busy? You can invite them to something that directly effects them in their own community. Anytime you are in a room and you get called on and you get 30-60 seconds to talk about RESULTS issues in a big group. Talk to those volunteers about how you do all of this incredible advocacy work outside of campaigns and invite them to join you after election day is over.

Why does this all matter? Why are we pushing these? Two things. It will help us push things that is happening in congress now like the REACH Act, protecting SNAP, etc. It is the best way to start preparing into January now. 90 new House members and 7 new seats and that is even if every incumbent wins their seat. We need to educate many new members and staff about our issues. If you are at an event volunteering on a campaign, talk about the work you are doing. Start engaging now.

If a reporter asks you how you like this event or how it is going? You can respond on how town halls are a great way to engage with citizens. That is very smart. It is not that the reporters are trying to be unkind or mess up your work. They are just trying to see how voters feel about the candidate and the event. You just don't want your name in the paper saying that you hate that candidate. It will make the candidate not want to talk to you. They are trying to see how the crowd feels.

Tell us what happens. We have a new dropdown! Each time you attend a town hall, please fill in the Candidate Engagement Tracker. Please use the normal Lobby Report Form if it is a sit down meeting with congress.

Check our 2018 election resource. You can talk to me. I can help you get all set engaging candidates.

I think now . . .

Jos Lin: It goes to me now, Carlie. Thank you for the training and helpful tips. I wanted to give you a brief update on our poverty campaigns mostly having to do with SNAP.

The congress is currently on recess. The house and senate passed their own versions back in June. Now the conference committee will be working on coming up with that final bill solution. There is 50 or 60 people in this conference committee. It will mainly be the top members. The Senate bill protects SNAP and the House Bill does not. We want to remind them that the only way they will get a farm bill passed is with a bipartisan farm bill that protects SNAP. The senators will be facing pressure to give in something to the House. SNAP is the most contentious issue.

You can go to the action sheet there listed at the bottom. It has information on some of the town hall tips that Carlie went over as well as those three questions that she went over on our United States poverty side on things to talk about. If you get a face to face meeting or you are going to a town hall, please let me know. Meredith is on vacation 'til the 20th. Let me know and we can help you prepare for that ahead of time.

Ken Patterson: Hello, everyone. In terms of our global priorities campaign right now, Is critical to get our TB supporters in the House and Senate. We want to move it towards passage.

On TB you did ground breaking work on the administration in September. You mobilized 106 representatives to sign on to that level. We must now focus on the senate letter as Carlie mentioned. We want to get this done 'til the end of August. We want to shoot for 33 signers for the Senate TB letter. There is an action sheet that will come out later this week. I am looking for several people interested in writing some more letters.

Let's go beyond 218 cosponsors and send a message that the bill must be passed this year. We have 31 cosponsors in the Senate. Several of you have had several interest. You can tell them that we don't know what will happen around the amendment and it should not prevent them from signing the bill. We will deal with the amendment issue later.

The next part this webinar, we want to give you a chance to talk to each other a bit and give you a chance to strategize. We will give you the next ten minutes and talk to your group on these two as that you see there. If you are joining the webinar on your own write down some ideas on your own as well. We may have a firewire minutes from folks about what they came up with.

Which candidates (including Incumbents) will your group contact to talk about addressing poverty in the new Congress?

How will your group engage non group members to raise awareness of poverty issues in the election?

We will give you ten minutes to work in your rooms and then we will come back together. If you have any questions, put them in the chat window.

[2:46 "10 Minute Strategizing."]

Ken Patterson: I will allow you to unmute your own lines. If you are not speaking, please keep your line muted so we don't get background noise. Jos, you can do what you need to here.

Jos: Thanks, Ken. Why don't we listen to some ideas that folks came up with. If you had a discussion with your group and came up with a brilliant idea, you can share it through the chat window or you can unmute your own line to share briefly what you are doing. I would ask you to keep it to one or two sentences so we can get as many folks share as we can before ending the call. Anyone come up with ideas they want to share?

Northern Virginia: We are in the 10th district of Virginia and try to get some questions put to them.

Jos: Good luck, David!

Who else?

Jim Driggers: Since our local member is an advocate, we want to have a community event to lobby more support.

Jos: Great idea! A lot of people during election season are thinking up to the election, not afterwards.

[Feedback.]

Is Ft. Worth wanting to share something?

Ft Worth: I went to a town hall meeting. Several people liked what I had to say. We will be taking RESULTS brochures and be prepared to hand them out so if you go to a town hall meeting, you have something to share with them with information.

Jos: Good luck with that. Our folks in St. Louis said they have some 18 year old friends that are frustrated with their voice not being heard and we want to engage them with letter writing. Be sure to report that on our candidate trackers and put the link in the chat box. It is in the slides as well. We will be promoting it with weekly updates. We have time for one or two more shares.

Any ideas, or thoughts?

Northern Virginia: We have an action network of about 200 people. Dave said we could sent out an alert so anyone going to any debates between candidates these are some questions we can ask and help them find support when they go to these meetings.

Carly Pildris: That is wonderful. Any of you, particular with Big Action networks, I would be more than happy to do a training for you. I can help do that research for you guys.

Jos: That is a good reminder. Carly is a great resource on engaging candidates with this work. She worked with the Obama campaign. She knows what she is doing.

I am going to close out the call with a few announcements. Remember, please, if you have not filled out your lobby report forms, please do that. It is very important to our work and working with our coalition and reporting our numbers to founders. That data is important to us. Please fill out those lobby reports as soon as you can. We have some new advocate orientations coming up. Our free agent calls will be coming up on August 20th. You can find all of these events and more on the events calendar.

We appreciate everyone coming on this call. It is always great to have the whole family together for this call. In September, we will go back to separate webinars. The United States Poverty Campaigns national webinar will be on Tuesday September 4, at 8:00 p.m. ET.

There is only one thing left to say to you - our fabulous volunteer network about candidate engagement in this election. That is "GO!" We appreciate it. Everyone can unmute their lines and say good luck to each other.

[End webinar.]