

CAI Legislative Action Committee Fundraising Toolkit

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Helping Communities Thrive, One Donation at a Time



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CAI Legislative Action Committee Fundraising Toolkit

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If you have any questions or concerns, please contact government@caionline.org.

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Community Associations Institute (CAI)

Community Associations Institute (CAI) is an international membership organization dedicated to building better communities. With over 50,000 members, CAI has 64 chapters worldwide and relationships with housing leaders in a number of other countries. CAI members include association board members and other homeowner leaders, community managers, association management firms, and other professionals who provide products and services to community associations. CAI provides information, education and resources to the homeowner volunteers who govern communities and the professionals who support them. CAI advocates for and represents the 77.1 million people living and working in America's 369,000 community associations (homeowners associations, condominiums, and housing cooperatives).

CAI State Legislative Action Committees (LACs)

Legislative Action Committees (LACs) work to monitor state legislation, educate lawmakers, and protect the interests of those living and working in community associations. Each committee is comprised of homeowner leaders, community managers, and representatives from community association business partners who graciously volunteer their time.

Visit [CAI's website](#) to learn if your state has an established LAC and explore our advocacy efforts in your area.

Learn More



CAI's Issues Advancement Fund (IAF)

CAI's Board of Trustees established the Issues Advancement Fund to help support and advance CAI's legislative, regulatory and legal advocacy efforts and programs. It was established to provide a resource base to enable CAI to respond to challenges, which, if unmet, could undermine community associations, their residents and member professionals. The Issues Advancement Fund works to support efforts at both the state and federal levels. The IAF accepts voluntary contributions from individuals, associations and businesses that wish to directly support CAI's government affairs initiatives. Donations to the IAF may be deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses, but are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Who Can Donate to Support CAI LACs and the IAF?

Individuals, organizations, and businesses can all donate to support this work. Additionally, most community association boards can legally allocate money to support CAI's LACs. Please check your governing documents to verify before donating. You do not have to be a CAI member to contribute to a LAC. Corporate contributions are allowed and appreciated. No portion of any such contributions will go to any political party, legislator, or legislative candidate.



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Fundraising Tactics

- 50/50 raffle
 - Note that some states have laws restricting which organizations can host a 50/50 raffle and/or may require a games of chance license in order to legally host one.
- Digital (online) fundraising
- Exclusive webinar/information opportunities
- Legislative updates/briefings with donation requests
- Mailing flyers/pamphlets ("snail mail")
- Tabling or making a speech/fundraising pitch at another group/organization's event or market
- Phone banking
- Resolution fundraising
- Sponsorship packages for LAC events
- Hosting an in-person event

Arts and Theater Events

- Crafting events
 - Tie dye
 - Scrapbooking
 - Candle making
 - Collaging
- Neighborhood chalking
- Karaoke
- Silent auctions or art auctions
- Trips to see local performances
- Benefit concert from a local band or choir

Food and Drink Events

- Beer/wine/whiskey tasting
- Block parties with local food trucks
- Happy hours hosted at local brewery, café, or winery
- High tea
- Luncheons
- Potlucks/BBQs
- Wine tastings

Sports and Games Events

- Field day
- Bowling
- Carnival games
- Golf outings
- Laser tag
- Group exercise or dance classes

Trips and Outings

- Brewery/distillery/vineyard tour
- Ghost tours
- Historical site visits
- Museum
- Zoo
- Park
- Pub crawl
- Sports outings

Holiday-Specific Events

- 4th of July events/parades
- End-of-Summer/Back to School
- Easter egg hunt
- Halloween party
- Holiday party/gift exchange
 - Tree lighting ceremonies
 - Visits from Santa/Photo ops
- Multicultural parties
- Valentine's party

Competition-Based Events

- Art or t-shirt design competition
- Bartending competition
- Cooking competition
- Scavenger hunt
- Sports competition
- Talent competition
- Trivia nights
- Walk-a-thon or Dance-a-thon

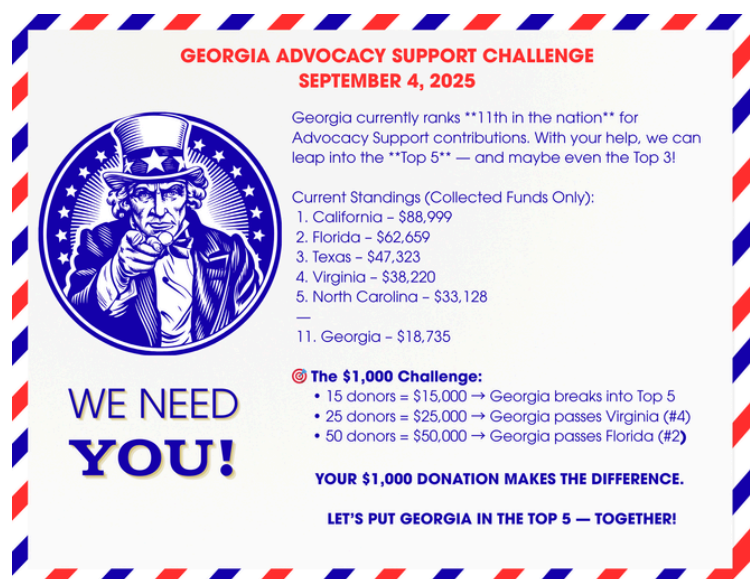
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LAC Fundraising Flyers: Examples



See More Examples



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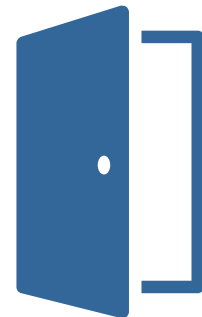
CAI produces a variety of resources for LACs to utilize as part of advocacy and fundraising efforts. In this document is a sample email which can be further customized to meet individual LAC needs and maximize effectiveness. While there is no one “correct” way to construct a fundraising email, this sample message is intended to provide a proven foundation to work from, utilizing language and themes from past successful LAC campaigns.

CAI’s Dollar-A-Door Campaign

CAI LACs fundraise so that they can continue to educate legislators and build relationships on behalf of those living and working in community associations across their respective states. In order to be successful in supporting or opposing legislation, they rely on donations that make their legislative advocacy and outreach efforts possible.

As part of an ongoing campaign, we ask associations to consider donating \$1 per door (or more) to support the LAC in their state. For instance, if your association has 100 units, we ask for a contribution of \$100 (or more!).

CAI publishes updated flyers annually to support this campaign, highlighting the critical work done during the previous legislative session. The most recent version can be found on your state’s [LAC webpage](#).



Fundraising with Digital Postcards

A virtual postcard is a simple image, in the style of a real postcard, which can be sent via email or another service to a network of people. This image helps capture the audience’s attention and clearly communicates the fundraising ask.

Those living in the states for which CAI does not have an official LAC should ask potential donors in their networks to support CAI’s Issues Advancement Fund (IAF), which supports advocacy efforts in such states as well as at the federal level.

Intended Audience - Who to Email

- Friends
- Family
- Fellow CAI members in your state/chapter
- Neighbors and fellow association members
- Colleagues and professional connections (past and present)
- Your association’s Board

Download Your State’s Postcard



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Fundraising with Digital Postcards

Instructions to Send via Email

- Decide who you want to reach out to and create a list of recipients for your message.
- [Navigate to the Google Drive and locate the document labeled "TEMPLATE LANGUAGE."](#)
- Make a copy of this document and save it to your computer (or wherever your LAC saves documents).
- Fill in state- and LAC-specific information in the highlighted areas of the message (**orange text below**).
- Feel free to personalize your message to maximize effectiveness.
 - Consider adding additional information about who you are, what your role is within the community association industry, and why you think CAI's work is critical.
 - You may also add details about your personal relationship with the person/people you are reaching out to.
- [Download the appropriate digital postcard](#) and attach it to your message.

New Message

To [List of Recipients]

Subject A Personal Appeal- Support the CAI [State] LAC's Volunteer Efforts and Donate to Today!




Dear [NAME],



As a fellow member of the community association industry in [State], I am personally reaching out to you with an opportunity to support the volunteer effort being carried out by CAI [State] LAC. The LAC works year-round to protect the community association living and foster an environment that lets our homeowners and communities thrive. The critical legislation in [State Capital] we support, propose, monitor, or oppose has a direct impact on the community associations across our state.

By contributing [Fundraising Ask or generic 'a small donation'], you help ensure that the voices of [State]'s community associations are heard loud and clear by our elected officials. This grassroots fundraising campaign fuels our advocacy efforts and ensures CAI can represent homeowners like me across our state. [Sentence giving example of recent legislative actions/negotiations].

I encourage you to include this contribution in your association's 2026 budget or make a one-time donation to support our year-round efforts here: <https://advocacy.caionline.org/lac-donation-form/>. Thank you in advance for supporting our volunteer efforts. Your partnership means a great deal to CAI and contributes greatly to the continued strength of our industry.

Sincerely,

SEND

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Digital Postcards: Examples

Connecticut



Georgia



Maryland



Pennsylvania



Download Your State's Postcard



Use the Postcard Labeled Issues Advancement Fund (IAF):

Alaska
Arkansas
Iowa
Kansas
Mississippi
Montana
Nebraska

New Mexico
North Dakota
South Dakota
Vermont
West Virginia
Wyoming

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Fundraising Tips from CAI

Define Purpose and Goals

Clarify about your campaign's purpose and desired outcomes. This helps foster trust and ensures that potential donors understand the impact of their contributions.

Lead By Example

If someone else sees you make a donation, they might be more compelled to do so themselves. Set the stage for more donations!

Follow Up

Don't be afraid to make your ask more than once! People are busy and don't always see your fundraising messages or event invitations the first time you see them. Keep donors and potential donors consistently engaged in your work.

Incentivize Giving

Let people know why their donation is worthwhile! Make them feel appreciated and/or reward them in some way.

Make It Easy

Make it as easy as possible to donate! Place a QR code in front of event attendees or otherwise distribute the donation link to make it quick and easy to make a donation. Be prepared to accept cash/check donations at events.

Peer-to-Peer Encouragement

An individual, company, or organization may decide to match donations made to the LAC. This is most often done at a 1:1 ratio or a dollar-for-dollar rate, which doubles the initial donation.

FOMO

Make a personal appeal, bring up a neighboring community or a fellow firm's recent donation and challenge the audience to match.

Event Sponsorships

If the LAC is hosting a fundraising event, consider asking business partners and management company members to sponsor the event for a fee. Sponsorships raise additional funds and help cover event costs, while providing visibility to the sponsors. LACs are encouraged to work with CAI chapters to recruit event sponsors.

Clear Messaging

Make sure donors know that they are NOT donating to the PAC/political candidates when supporting the LAC.

All Donations are Good!

No donation is too small. A \$1 donation is great, as is a \$1,000 donation. Encourage people to give what they can, when they can, to support the LAC.

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