



AFT Pennsylvania

A Union of Professionals

Stand Up • Speak Up • Sign Up

ASKING MEMBERS TO JOIN CSPE

CSPE

Committee to Support Public Education

Asking colleagues/union members to contribute to CSPE gives leaders with an opportunity to engage members, learn more about their concerns and issues and demonstrate ways in which their union can address those concerns. It can and should be the start of a continuing dialogue about the issues we face. We suggest that you introduce the Committee to Support Public Education at a union event or membership meeting and distribute documents (CSPE Flyer, Stand Up handout). But in the end, people give to people, not causes. Your personal, one-on-one connection is crucial to building AFTPA's political influence.

Introduction

Introduce yourself and explain why you are having the conversation.

Problem

Ask what the member is concerned about professionally or personally as it relates to government. Funding? Layoffs? Bargaining rights? The answer will vary from member to member, and the key to making an effective connection is to not assume a member's concerns or interests, but to find out through conversation what matters to them.

Solution

Once you identify the issues of concern, make a connection between the issues and political action. For example, if the member is concerned about state education funding, you can discuss AFTPA's recent lobbying effort last spring to stop legislators from cutting 20-30% of the funding to colleges and universities. The key is to make the connection explicit.

The 'Ask'

Once you've made the connection between their concerns and CSPE, ask them to make a contribution via mobile device, iPad or computer. Your request should be:

- **Clear:** "Will you sign up to make regular, voluntary contributions to CSPE?"
- **Specific:** "Will you commit to contributing \$5-\$10 per month through automated deductions from a checking account or debited to your debit/credit card account? (You may suggest an amount but members may give any amount in recurring or one-time contributions.)"
- **Urgent:** Whether you focus on an upcoming election, legislation or a funding or policy issue, make sure members understand that 100% of their contribution is used to elect and educate candidates about issues facing us.
- **Easy:** Convey how easy it is to join CSPE. It takes a little more than a minute to fill out a brief web form.
- **Secure:** The payment processing system uses PayPal, with the highest industry standards of Internet security.

Continued

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Wait

Wait patiently and silently for an answer. The member may have more questions—What does CSPE stand for? How is this part of the campaign? Can I think about it?—questions which the organizer should answer using the FAQ or offer to research and get the answer as soon as possible. Then, the organizer asks again and waits again.

If the answer is “no” have an alternative “ask” ready. If not \$5 a month ask, “What amount would you be comfortable contributing monthly?” (Our goal is monthly, rather than one-time, contributions because monthly contributions permit AFT Pennsylvania to plan for future elections based on a predictable income stream.)

If the member is not ready to make a monthly commitment, ask: “Would you be more comfortable making a one-time contribution?” If they cannot not make a financial commitment at this time, be understanding and find out what might they be interested in doing? Volunteering? Signing a petition? Signing up for email or text-message updates? Writing letters to legislators, newspapers or school board members? Handing out informational flyers?

Even if they don’t join CSPE, please ask for their name, phone number, non-work email address and home address with zip code, and mobile telephone number and share it with your AFTPA staff representative. We are interested in developing politically active members. Part of an effective political organizing program is having multiple ways a member can become involved.

If the answer is “yes,” show or tell the member how to contribute online. We recommend that you use a personal or union-owned computer, iPad/tablet or mobile phone to **sign them up right there**. Open the form on your device or on their device, but **always let them fill out the form**. If they cannot contribute at that time, make sure you have a name and a non-work email address and send them the link from the AFTPA.ORG web page. Never fill out the web form for a member.

Thank them

They will receive an email “thank-you” immediately. But it is important that you take the time to thank them personally as well. The emphasis is not on the member doing you a favor, but rather working together to build a better future.

Overall

The message to convey is that CSPE is our issue-based, member-driven political program. We want to make our voices heard and help elect pro-education and pro-public services candidates.