

City Council Resolutions – Nurturing Local Peacebuilding



Mountain States Regional Conference
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Presenters:
Carla Handy
Milt Hetrick



Workshop Overview

- Introductions
- **Goal:** Help pass the next City Council Resolution supporting a U.S. Department of Peace and Nonviolence.

This Workshop will answer:

- Why pass a city council resolution in your community?
- HOW to pass a city council resolution in your community?
- How to work with your local government.
- Tips from successful cities around the country.
- Translate DoPN Mission to local issues.
 - Examine what a Department of Peace could have done to prevent recent violence.
 - What the DoPN can do to prevent future violence and expand opportunities for growth
- Examples of typical comments and questions.
- Feedback / Questions



Introductions

■ Presenters

- **Carla Handy:** Centennial resident and CD6 CODoPN volunteer / "co-leader".
 - Background in Psychology / Sociology from Metropolitan State College of Denver
 - Sales & marketing in the custom home industry
 - Married, mother of two girls, 5 years & 15 years old.
 - Involved in fundraising for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Attendee of Mile Hi Church, Lakewood, CO.
 - Hobbies: reading, running, hiking, biking, diving and a big supporter of local Denver musicians.
- **Milt Hetrick,** Centennial resident, CD6 Volunteer and CODoPN Model Project Coordinator
 - Background in aerospace Engineering (Ohio State) / Physics (DU)
 - Semi-retired
 - Married, father of three
 - Involved in volunteer work for Peace & Justice organizations, research and the application of technology to Peacemaking. Attendee of First Universalist Church, Denver, CO
 - Hobbies: woodworking, genealogy, restoration of Model A Fords, biking

■ Attendees



Why a City Council Resolution?

- There are many reasons for enrolling your local governing body in adopting a resolution to support legislation for a U.S. Department of Peace:
 - It helps show broad public support for the Department of Peace
 - It educates the public about the Department of Peace
 - It generates free publicity that comes with open and televised City Council meetings, plus follow-up electronic and print media coverage.
 - It gives you something to send to your Members of Congress to assist you in continuing to positively influence them.

* Reference: [National Web Site](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/172/143/) [http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/172/143/]



Working with your local government (Strategy)

- Find a champion (council member, Mayor, youth group, etc.) who can help provide access / information about the Council
- Setup one-on-one meetings with Council members if possible - the 5-10 minutes you have to make a presentation to the full council is not adequate to change any preconceived ideas of the Department of Peace
- Find local issues that the DoP would address (if it existed) and translate the H.R. 808 legislation to something that is applicable at a local level - meaningful to the City Council, City Manager, Mayor, etc.
- Involve youth groups when ever possible because they can be an effective influence on the Council
- Provide handouts with additional materials
- Tell them something they didn't know – including nonviolent alternatives



Tips from successful cities around the country

- List of [cities that have already endorsed the DoP](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/147/143/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/147/143/>]
- [Sample resolution](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/174/468/) and [Resolutions from other cities](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/174/468/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/174/468/>]
- Review resources available from the National Campaign web site
 - See [City Council Resolution Campaign Overview](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/172/468/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/172/468/>]
 - See [City Council Resolution Support Materials](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/173/468/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/173/468/>]
 - See [Sample Resolution](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/174/468/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/174/468/>]
- Review resources available from the Colorado Campaign web site
 - [Presentation to Centennial Mayor Pye](http://www.codopcampaign.org/References/MayorPyeCentennialPresentation.htm)
[<http://www.codopcampaign.org/References/MayorPyeCentennialPresentation.htm>]
 - [Presentations to City Council](http://www.codopcampaign.org/References/CentennialCityCouncilPresentation_11-05-07.htm)
[http://www.codopcampaign.org/References/CentennialCityCouncilPresentation_11-05-07.htm]
 - Sample Resolution
 - Mayoral Proclamation



List of Current Endorsements

32 Governing Council Resolutions (Updated December 2007)



City Councils/Commissions

- [Albany, CA](#)
- [Arcata, CA](#)
- Atlanta, GA
- [Berkeley, CA](#)
- Cambridge, MA
- [Chicago, IL](#)
- [Cleveland, OH](#)
- [Detroit, MI](#)
- Everett, MA
- Gainesville, FL
- Hamtramck, MI
- [Kalamazoo, MI](#)
- [Lansing, MI](#)
- Los Angeles, CA
- Lincoln City, OR
- Manistee, MI
- Minneapolis, MN
- [Newark, NJ](#)
- [Oakland, CA](#)
- [Palo Alto, CA](#)
- Pine Lake, GA
- [Portland, OR](#)
- [Providence, RI](#)
- [San Jose, CA](#)
- [Santa Cruz, CA](#)
- Sebastopol, CA
- Silver City, NM
- [Traverse City, MI](#)
- [West Hollywood, CA](#)

County Boards of Supervisors

- Kauai, HI
- [Manistee, MI](#)
- San Francisco, CA

Tribal Councils

- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, MI

"I have contacted several mayors in other cities around the nation that have already passed resolutions of support for the concept of a Department of Peace and none of us sees any downsides to it."

-- Randy Pye, Mayor, Centennial, CO



City Council Resolution – Centennial, Colorado

Resolution No. 2007-

A Resolution Supporting the proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace, encouraging those members of the Colorado Delegation who have not yet become sponsors of the proposed legislation to sign on as sponsors of the bill and further encouraging the U.S. Congress to pass said legislation.

- WHEREAS, during the 110th Congress, H.R. 808 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives legislation to create a **United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence**, that has now garnered the sponsorship of 60 members of the U.S. house of Representatives; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed legislation will establish a cabinet-level Department of Peace, which will be headed by a Secretary of Peace who will advise the President on issues that are both domestic and international in scope; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation will benefit the City of Centennial by holding peace as an organizing principal for American Society, thus changing the tone of American Society; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation will benefit the City of Centennial by developing new programs that address root causes of the societal challenges of domestic violence, school violence, and racial or ethnic violence; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation will further benefit the City of Centennial by encouraging development of initiatives from the community, its religious groups, and its non-governmental organizations, that will create greater community involvement and cooperation thereby creating a stronger city; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation will benefit the City of Centennial by reducing the cost of International and Domestic conflict, thereby allowing more funds to be redirected to the states and cities; and
- WHEREAS, the proposed federal legislation will benefit the City of Centennial by providing additional financial and human resources for reducing all forms of violence (and the related costs) while increasing opportunities for the city; therefore,
- **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CENTENNIAL:**
- Section 1. That this Council hereby supports the proposed federal legislation to create a **United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence**, encourages those members of the Colorado Delegation who have not yet become sponsors of the proposed legislation to sign on as sponsors of the bill and further encourages the U.S. Congress to pass said legislation.
- Section 2. That the Clerk of the Council is hereby directed to transmit certified copies of this resolution to all members of the U.S. House of Representatives representing the State of Colorado.



Translate DoPN Mission to local/city issues

- DoPN includes both International and Domestic activities
- Focus on the work of the DoPN on the domestic front – more specifically on local issues
 - Address the fact that **domestic violence costs the U.S. over \$300 Billion a year**
- DoPN mission can take on a broad perspective of “violence” and “peacefulness”
 - “Violence is any action that prevents a person from reaching their potential”
 - “Peacefulness is the lack of violence and presence of opportunity”
- Provide examples of what a DoPN could have done to prevent recent violence in your city
 - Kirkwood, MO City Council shootings,
 - Granby bulldozer,
 - New Life Church shootings,
- Provide examples of what the DoPN could do in the future to prevent violence and promote opportunities in their city
 - Support efforts such as the Metro Denver Gang Coalition
 - e.g. Comprehensive Gang Model developed by the DoJ
 - Provide early identification of “Red Flags”
 - Dial 912 to report unmanaged conflict situations.
 - The DoPN would send out a Peacemaking officer to assess the problem before it escalates to violence and someone has to call 911.



Examples of Preventable Violence

Unmanaged Conflict

- Charles Lee "Cookie" Thornton (Kirkwood, MO City Council shootings – 2/7/08)
 - **6 dead, 2 injured in Kirkwood City Hall shooting**
 - The city had ticketed Thornton's demolition and asphalt business, Cookco Construction, for parking his commercial vehicles in the neighborhood, said Ron Hodges, a friend who lives in the community. The tickets were "eating at him. He felt that as a black contractor he was being singled out," Hodges said.
 - At earlier city council meetings, he said he had received 150 tickets against his business.
 - Sportscaster Doug Vaughn of Channel 4 (who went to Kirkwood High School with Thornton) said Thornton's behavior changed after police cracked down on his parking of vehicles for his construction company outside his home in Meacham Park. He felt harassed, Vaughn said.
 - According to his brother, Thornton was "going to war" with a city that did not respect his rights.
 - 10 days earlier, a federal judge in St. Louis dismissed a lawsuit in which Thornton, representing himself, claimed Kirkwood officials violated his free speech rights by prohibiting him from speaking out at city council meetings.
 - Thornton experienced growing frustration with local leaders over this **unmanaged conflict situation**
- Marvin Heemeyer built an armored bulldozer and used it to destroy 15 buildings (\$5M damage) on July 4th, 2004 in Granby, CO.
 - Heemeyer was upset with town officials after fighting with them over zoning rules and town code violations at his muffler-repair business.
 - After numerous appearances with town officials, there was no resolution and the conflict escalated to violence. **unmanaged conflict situation**

Violentization Process

- Matthew Murray (New Life Church shootings – 12/30/07)
 - Review of Murray's childhood experiences indicate he appears to have been subjected to repeated "violent subjugation" **Ref: Lonnie Athens, "The Creation of Violent Dangerous Criminals"** for more information about the **violentization process**
- 5 April 2008



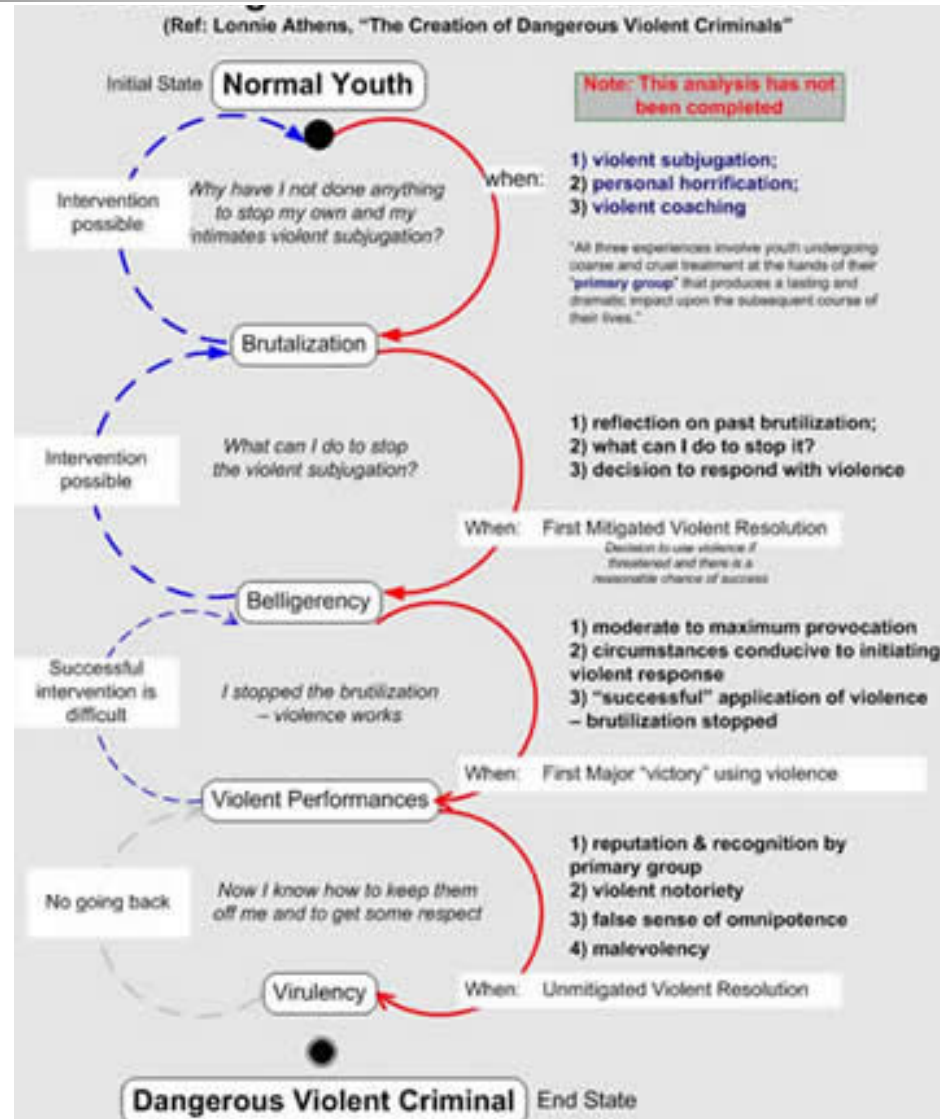
Would the DoPN have made any difference about the two church shootings today – one in Arvada – the other in CO Springs?”

- There are few (if any) “random” acts of violence
- The Department of Peace and Nonviolence will have experts who focus on recognizing “red flags”
- People who become violent (e.g. shooters) commonly signal their intentions long before they act
 - Parents need to learn about “violent subjugation.” Matthew Murray was subjected to a **violentization process**. He was unable to extricate himself from that environment.
 - Murray was home schooled – even home schooling can result in violent subjugating life experiences
 - if the schooling teaches hate, promotes intolerance, etc.
 - If it is conducted in secrecy with no accountability
 - Murray’s blogs and emails provided “red flags” – public information on the internet.
 - Some people (his parents, minister, church youth leaders,..) were concerned
 - But their response was to dish out more of the same subjugation
 - Murray bought 1000 rounds of ammunition and 4 guns weeks before the shootings – it was a legal purchase, but today’s “background” checks are obviously ineffective.
 - The background check currently does not demand any significant amount of investigation to determine the gun buyer’s emotional /mental state
 - The public has no way of determining if this person is buying the weapons and ammo with the intention of shooting at paper targets, or at people targets.
 - Since this purchase can endanger the public, doesn’t it seem reasonable to have several other representatives of the public evaluate the purchase.
- The DoPN could serve as a member of this gun/ammo review committee to provide a more in depth evaluation.
 - Anyone who has worked for the Department of Defense and has had a security clearance knows how in-depth DoD background investigations are. Typically a special agent personally interviews a half dozen associates to get a sense of the mental health of the individual, the economic status is also investigated.
- The DoPN would focus on why the buyer is purchasing weapons
 - A simple visit to the home or workplace would be appropriate in some cases
 - If there is any indication the buyer is in an unresolved conflict, that is a red flag that our society has failed to give the gun buyer any alternative tools to deal with their problems



Four Stages of the Violentization Process

- This model was developed by Lonnie Athens based on interviews of violent criminals while they were incarcerated



http://www.dopmodel.info/wiki/index.php/Lonnie_Athens%27_research_on_Violent_Criminals

5 April 2008



Examples of typical comments and questions.

- This isn't an appropriate topic for the City Council - why should we even consider getting involved?
 - As do many Federal Departments, the proposed DoPN will provide services at a state, county, and city level
 - As an elected City official you (city council member) can have an opinion on how this proposed new Federal Department will affect the residents of your city and provide value to your city.
 - The DoPN has a responsibility to help you address forms of violence occurring within your city.
 - Violence ranges from homicide, personal assault, rape, domestic abuse, vehicular assault, and robbery to self-inflicted violence such as substance abuse, extreme life styles, suicide, etc.
 - In addition, the DoPN will help you identify more subtle forms of violence that are commonly the root causes of the more visible physical violence reported in the media – called structural violence.
 - Examples of structural violence include: any child who is denied access to appropriate health care, any child that is prevented from obtaining an appropriate educational opportunity and positive learning environment, etc.
 - The DoPN will assist in identifying the root causes and recommend effective intervention programs
- This is just another layer of government – How can we afford more government?
 - How can we afford not to reduce the cost of domestic violence at \$300 Billion / year
 - If the DoPN reduces domestic violence by 3% it offsets its entire operating cost of \$8-10 Billion / year
 - If the DoPN is not able to reduce domestic violence by 3%, it should be discontinued



Examples of typical comments and questions.

- What the DoP is proposing is already being done by other Departments - why do we want to duplicate their efforts
 - There are hundreds of "violence reduction" programs spread over the partner Departments. See <http://www.dopmodel.info/wiki> for a partial list
 - Each of these programs has its own focus area.
 - Most attempt to "Fix" the offenders by making them more resilient, able to make "better" choices, to learn life skills. These programs are necessary to "repair" their wounds and missed opportunities
 - Few of these programs are coordinated in a holistic manner between the DoE, DoJ, DoHHS, HUD, DoC, etc. to the structural violence that exists that is often the root cause of domestic violence

- There will always be violence - what could the DoP do to change that?
 - The DOPN can remind us that there will always be conflict / differing opinions, differing values, and the perceived lack of resources – to use the tag line of **The Conflict Center** here in Denver, "Conflict is inevitable – BUT Violence is not."
 - To act violently is a choice - a choice we often make because we can't think of a nonviolent alternative. The DOPN will help us learn about effective nonviolent choices.
 - **Getting to Peace** by William Ury – Our task is not to change war into peace – it is not to go from zero percent peaceful interaction to 100 %, but rather from 90% to 99% pg xix - Ury talks about the third side and how we as "outsiders" or "third siders" play a significant role in peacemaking.

- More FAQs and responses can be found on the [National Campaign Web Site](http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/53/68/)
[<http://www.thepeacealliance.org/content/view/53/68/>]

- Questions / Feedback /



Additional Resource Material



City Council Resolution Support Materials

■ **The Meaning and Use of Resolutions**

A resolution is a means for a legislative body to express its intent on an issue or a one time event, for example, approving a permit for a march, renaming a street, or giving a testimonial. This is compared with an ordinance which is intended to act as a law to govern the conduct of members of the public as well as city officials, appointees and employees, for example, making disorderly conduct illegal, or requiring that all service stations be licensed.

- The adoption of resolutions is a routine matter for city councils. Generally, resolutions are brought forth by one or more members of the council based upon a request for the approval of an item by the mayor or city manager. However, as in this instance, the request for adoption of a resolution may come from the public.
- If Representatives receive resolutions of City Councils in their district and U.S. Senators receive them from many cities throughout their state, they will feel supported in co-sponsoring of or introducing the legislation for a U.S. Department of Peace. If already a cosponsor, then your Member of Congress will receive a resolution which requests that they use their office to obtain other sponsors from their state delegation or from the state's U.S. senators.

A Resident or Property Owner Should Be the Contact Person

Ours is a representative government and, as such, elected officials respond to their constituents. Therefore, contact with the city officials should be made by a resident of the city or a non-resident who owns property or has a business in the city. This person should also be the one to sign any correspondence to city officials and to be the lead person who makes the presentation.



City Council Resolution Support Materials

Aim for a Initial Victory

When visiting cities throughout your congressional district, it is a good idea to begin with a city where your chances of success are good. If you have an even chance in two or more cities, then visit the smaller city first; this will give your group the opportunity to practice before making your presentation before the city council of a larger or major city.

Form a Relationship with at Least One Member of Your City Council

In some cities, it can be helpful if you form a relationship with at least one of your City Council members who will act as a sponsor to promote and usher through your resolution. If you do not know a member of your City Council, you should read information on the city's website regarding its council members, and mayor if a manager form of government, to learn which council members are interested in issues that will be addressed by the Department of Peace, for example, domestic violence or drug and alcohol addiction. You can also learn about your city-elected officials by reading on-line newspaper articles, which mention issues that they may champion. You can stop by their offices, or send them an e-mail, to request that they meet with you to discuss the proposed legislation to create a Department of Peace. When you get one or more members of a City Council to accept your point of view, you will have a much easier time as the member will be in your corner and will argue the merits of adopting the resolution.



City Council Resolution Support Materials

- **Become Familiar with the Process for Getting on the Agenda**

In order to request the adoption of a resolution as a member of the public, you must get on the City Council agenda. Generally, you should contact the city clerk who will explain the procedure for getting on the agenda. You should respectfully follow the clerk's instructions as this person is the gatekeeper for placing items on the agenda. In addition, you should visit the city's website to determine when council sessions are held and the requirements for getting on the agenda.

Learn About the Composition of Each City Council

When preparing a letter to your elected city officials, you will need to determine whether your form of city government is a 'strong mayor form of government' or a 'city-manager form of government.' Generally, you can determine this by checking the city's website, which will provide the names of the elected officials and, if applicable, the name of the city manager. If your city is a strong mayor form of government, then the mayor is not part of the City Council and you should address your letter to members of the City Council only. ([see model letter.](#)) If your city is a manager form of government, generally the mayor is on the City Council and you should address your letter to the mayor and to the members of the City Council. ([see model letter.](#))

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City Council Resolution Support Materials

- **Contents of Your Letter and Necessary Enclosures**

We have created model letters, as templates, for your use; this will save you time and energy which, instead, can be used for the requisite activities discussed below. As the sample letters indicate, your letter should: 1) request that members of your congressional district be afforded a discussion or study session to make a power point presentation to the City Council; 2) enclose a copy of the legislation ([bill 110th 165.66 Kb](#)) to create a U.S. Department of Peace, along with [key promotional material](#) from The Peace Alliance; 3) enclose a proposed resolution for adoption by the City Council ([see model resolution](#)); and 4) request that the proposed resolution be adopted and mailed to your Member of Congress and U.S. Senators.

Make Personal Contact with the City Clerk to Get on the Agenda

A package which contains your letter, a copy of the bill, and a proposed resolution should be addressed to each member of your city council and hand-delivered to your city clerk. This will ensure that the packages were received and will give you the opportunity to talk with the city clerk or a member of their staff. By making personal contact with the city clerk, or even forming a friendly relationship, you will have the ability to obtain insight into the workings of the city council as well as the “do’s” and “don’ts” when approaching and addressing the Body.



City Council Resolution Support Materials

- **Follow Through on the City Council's Response to Your Request**

Your letter will receive a response. The response may be: 1) you will be permitted to make your power point presentation during a discussion or a study session; 2) you will be permitted to address the Body during its public comment portion of the session; or 3) your request is being tabled for further action. If the response is #1, great, you will be making a full-blown presentation before the Body. If your response is #2, this probably means that the Body wants to determine whether there is sufficient interest or support in the community for the Body to adopt your resolution, or you have not garnered interest or support from one or more council members. If your response is #3, then you should move on to the next city in your congressional district with the goal of returning after you have obtained adoption of the resolution by another or other city councils.

Make Necessary Preparations for the Presentation

If you are permitted to make your power point presentation, then you should ensure that all contingencies are covered, including contacting the city clerk's office regarding the availability of equipment. You should practice your presentation before members of your group, who should ask hypothetical questions and critique your performance. On the day of the presentation, you should arrive at least ½ hour before the session begins so that you can set up your equipment and be prepared. You may not be first on the agenda so you will want to set up before the proceedings begin so as not to cause a delay when it is your turn. In the event that you have never addressed a city council, it is a good idea to attend a session on a day prior to your discussion or study session to observe the members as well as to get a feel for the proceedings.



City Council Resolution Support Materials

- **Fill the City Council Chambers with Supporters**

On the day of the presentation, it is important to bring city residents, business owners and members from your congressional district. Often, City Council meetings are not well attended since most city council meetings are televised on the city's public access cable channel. More people mean increased pressure for the Body to adopt your resolution.

- **Be Respectful and Answer All Questions**

When addressing City Council members, you should address them as "Council President", or "Council Member", or "Mister Mayor", or "Madam Mayor", or "Chair", as the case may be. You will lose points if you address them by first or surnames. When you are making your presentation, you should speak slowly, clearly, and address all questions. If you cannot answer a question, then you should ask one of your colleagues to do so.



City Council Resolution Support Materials

- **Tactfully Keep the Pressure on Until Action Is Taken and, When Taken, Provide Department of Peace Materials**

Based upon its procedures, the City Council may take action on your resolution at the same discussion or study session, or may take action on your resolution at a later date. Whether the body acts in favor or against the resolution, do not disrupt the proceedings. When the proceedings are concluded, you may wish to present each member of the city council with a Department of Peace button and bumper sticker. This is a means to have further one-on-one discussions. Likewise, after the proceedings are concluded, it is helpful for Department of Peace activists to respectfully approach the City Council members and, if they voted in favor, ask whether there were any points which were unclear and, if they voted against, ask whether there were any points which they did not understand.

Make Certain the Resolution Is Sent to Your Member of Congress and U.S. Senators

At times, city employees are overwhelmed, short staffed, and make mistakes. Therefore, it is important that you follow up and ensure that the resolution is sent to your Member of Congress and U.S. Senators. In order to make certain that your representatives and their complete policy staffs see the resolution, you should request that the city clerk mail the resolution to their Washington, D.C. offices and that you receive a copy of the transmittal letter and adopted resolution. If you know the address, it is a good idea to provide the city clerk with the Washington, D.C. office addresses of your representatives.



For More Information, Contact:

National Campaign (The Peace Alliance)

www.dopcampaign.org

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