

The Inside Story On Getting Proclamations

Proclamations can give your local or state America Recycles Day campaign credibility by putting the weight of a local governmental agency behind it. While proclamations are quite common in many communities, securing them does take some planning. Here are the steps to assure that your celebration will receive official status.

1. Who Do You Want to Sign It? Generally, the higher the authority, the better. Locally, the mayor is the logical choice. But if your governor or U.S. Senator is willing, he or she may be the better choice. Just be sure you select someone who is known and respected and who has media clout in your area. And be realistic. If the governor is a long shot, don't waste your time. Move on to someone you know is attainable.

2. Allow Plenty of Lead Time. Elected officials have busy schedules and may be slow to commit. Give them plenty of time to consider your request, and allow yourself plenty of time to move on to someone else if your request is rejected. Proclamations usually have to be vetted by staff.

3. Call First. A phone call to the appropriate representative of the person you want to make the proclamation serves two purposes. It alerts him or her that your request is coming in writing. And it gives the representative an opportunity to check scheduling and let you know the likelihood of success.

4. Request It in Writing. Assistants to political figures like written records of requests. Make your request clear, and include a copy of your proposed proclamation for review. (Sample proclamations are located in the appendices.)

5. Follow Up. Give your request about 10 days and then call the representative to check on its status. If no answer has been given, ask when you should call back. It is important to be persistent without becoming bothersome.

6. Get a Hard Copy. Be sure to get a copy of the proclamation for use in news stories and promotions.

7. Seek Press Coverage. Ask the elected official making the proclamation if he or she would be willing to read the proclamation at a press conference on a convenient date.