Communicating w/ Frustrated Constituents

Senator

During frustrating and uncertain times, we all know how important it is to communicate directly with our constituents and show them we are engaged and working for them.

Right now, people across the state are feeling powerless. Here are three things each of us can do to empower our constituents and amplify their concerns, courtesy of our Delegation consultants:

1) Engage with frustrated constituents directly.
   Pick a few Facebook messages or voicemails to respond to and respond personally. Ask for a number to reach them at, make the call, and listen. Then, let them know you share their concerns. Let them hear the frustration in your voice.

2) Record a personal video for social media.
   The video doesn’t have to be fancy, just authentic. Let your supporters see and hear your disappointment in the Governor’s decision.

   * Idea #1: Film in front of a local store forced to close using your cellphone in "selfie-mode".
   * Idea #2: Share stories of local businesses struggling to survive under this statewide shutdown.

Potential Script Outline:

* I’m disappointed in the Governor’s decision.

* Share the Governor’s email address & switchboard number in your message. (866)366-1121

* Join me in telling the Governor - enough is enough.

* I know you’re struggling and worried. I talk every day to people who are worried about their jobs and how to pay their bills.

* The Governor should listen to the President & his experts and adopt a regional, parish by parish approach to reopening.

* A one-size-fits-all, universal shut down is NOT sustainable
If you create a video or social media post, please text a link to Jason at 225.772.9316 so we can share it on the Delegation's social media.

3) Share the petition at https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.openanow.com%2F&amp;data=02%7C01%7C7Cdc78d841feb94c4a5ab308d7ebc9bdf7%7C84df9e7fe9fe40af435aaaadaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637237124010994028&amp;amp;data=om%2BbR7L6hOQoxWWhSS98sjNh6FzLO2GAwiltoWUw2m%2Damp%3Dreserved=0&lt;https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%2F%2Ft-l-pljudtk-zitjdkruzr%2F&amp;data=02%7C01%7C7Cdc78d841feb94c4a5ab308d7ebc9bdf7%7C84df9e7fe9fe40af435aaaadaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637237124010994028&amp;amp;data=f%2BzIzQWwHORar%2BpXPZ0TqVizKFCG7R2zGLC95Ujw3SHi%3D%3D%3D&amp;amp%3Dreserved=0&gt; with your constituents.

Senator Hewitt launched an online petition to give frustrated citizens a voice in the process. In less than a week, over 10,000 Louisianans have signed the petition. There has been a significant spike in signatures since the Governor’s announcement. Sharing the petition is a way to let your constituents know they are not alone and provides an outlet for them to have a voice.

Please click HERE <https://eur04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.openanow.com%2F&amp;data=02%7C01%7C7Cdc78d841feb94c4a5ab308d7ebc9bdf7%7C84df9e7fe9fe40af435aaaadaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637237124010994028&amp;amp;data=e0nqRcwwTBA8c60%28YGaff6opgqTcVQgJ%2Fcmpljg%2B%3D%3D%3D&amp;amp%3Dreserved=0> to view/download a messaging document from our consultants with strong words and phrases to use in your communications and trap words to avoid.

We know many of these suggestions might seem like common sense, but they are some of the best tools available to us right now to help our constituents feel heard. We will continue to work with you all to explore every option to get our state running again so we can get back to serving our constituents and rebuilding our economy.

Thank you,

Sen. Sharon Hewitt, Chairwoman
Confidential Messaging Brief
Topic: Stay at Home Extension
Release Date: Monday, April 27 (Version: 1)

GOOD WORDS (Words to Use)
Empower                      President Trump
Deserve a Voice              Consideration
Constituents                 Regional
Data-driven                  Parish-by-Parish
Local                        Jobs
Reasonable                   Special Session

Listen                      Meaningful
Safe                         Personal
Responsibility               Frustrated

Disappointed                 Economy
Lives & livelihood           Resilient

TRAP WORDS (Words to Avoid)
Republican                   Partisan
Democrat                     Models
Irresponsible                Attack

Risky                       Politics/Political
Hoax                        

Spike                        Budget
Death/die

ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS
Are you worried about people dying?
Why don’t you support the Governor?
Will reopening too early cause the virus to rebound?
You say now, do you think NOW is the time to reopen?
Shouldn’t there be a bipartisan approach?
Doesn’t the President’s plan empower the Governor with this decision?
The Governor said the Vice President supports his decision, why don’t you?
Do you think a virus respects parish borders?
Will you have time to debate/pass a budget and controversial reforms?
Why can’t tort reform/coastal lawsuits wait until next session?
Will the Governor have to call a special session?
Are you saying jobs and money are more important than saving lives?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / TRANSITIONS
That’s not accurate...        In my experience...
Let me put that in perspective...
I hope so. (I hope not.)
Let’s back up a little bit.

It depends.
It’s too early to tell.
What I’ve heard.
HEADLINES
1. President Trump and his experts recommend a parish-by-parish approach.
2. The Governor’s statewide, one-size fits all approach is not sustainable.
3. We can focus on protecting lives while restoring livelihoods.
4. I believe in personal responsibility.
5. Business owners should be trusted to make smart decisions.
6. This is about giving people a voice.
7. For six weeks the people listened to Government, now we need to listen to them.
8. The data shows each parish/region is affected differently.
9. The Governor said he’s not even considering a regional approach.
10. We need a responsible and meaningful reboot to our economy.
11. More government control is not the solution to this problem.
12. Our constitutional rights must be returned.
13. We can’t wait till June to reopen.
14. I am disappointed in the Governor’s decision to delay the restart of our economy.
15. Louisianans are smart and resilient. I trust them to make the right decision for
   themselves and their families.

STORY / FACT / ANECDOTE
A. The first page of President Trump’s plan discusses a parish by parish opening.
B. Over 350,000 of our neighbors have lost their jobs due to this economic shutdown.
C. 30 parishes had single digit deaths and under 100 total cases.
D. Surrounding states are restarting their economies, leaving Louisiana further behind.
E. Louisiana currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation.
F. Almost 20% of state’s eligible workforce is currently out of work.
G. Shreveport is closer to Dallas. Monroe is closer to Jackson. Lake Charles is closer to
   Houston. Slidell is closer to Gulfport.
H. President Trump’s expert, Dr. Birx, has called on Governors to explore regional and
   parish by parish reopening.
SAMPLE SOCIAL COPY
The data shows each region is affected differently. That's why President Trump and his experts recommend a parish-by-parish approach to restarting our economy and the Governor's statewide, "one size fits all" approach is not sustainable.

I believe in personal responsibility. Business owners should be trusted to make smart decisions. We can focus on protecting lives while working to restore livelihoods.

More government control is not the solution. For six weeks the people have listened to the Government, now it must listen to them.

Over 350,000 of our neighbors have lost their jobs due to this economic shutdown. Almost 20% of the state's eligible workforce is currently out of work. We can't wait till June to reopen.

I am disappointed in the Governor's decision. This delay in restarting our economy will destroy jobs and ruin livelihoods. We need a responsible and meaningful reboot for our economy.

Louisianans are smart and resilient. I trust them to make the right decision for themselves and their families.