



# *Alliance for Nuclear Accountability*

*A national network of organizations working to address issues of  
nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup*



## **DC Days 2012: Organizing at Home**

Participating in DC Days can be a very empowering experience for local organizations. It adds another dimension to the work we do as grassroots activists, builds a deeper sense of commitment to our community and world, and provides the satisfaction knowing that even one person can have an impact on public policy decisions. It just takes that one person asking a policy maker a question or seeking an answer to a problem to make a difference. YOU can be that ONE!

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability has compiled the following list to make DC Days a more meaningful experience for you and members of your organization.

### **Recruit several people from your group**

Coming to DC Days together is a great way to **build community and turn a group of individuals into a team of skilled advocates**. Activists will learn a broad range of skills that will be useful to your organization in the future, from learning how to raise the money to increasing participation and to learning the most effective ways to report back to your community. As you think about who would be good to send, consider the following:

- Active volunteers
- Board members
- Staff
- Interns, youth, high school & college students – sending a young person to DC can deepen their commitment to nuclear issues and your organization
- Representatives from diverse and impacted constituencies
- Community or governmental leaders
- Allied friends and organizations

All participants will need to have some stamina for long days on Capitol Hill, flexibility in dealing with changing circumstances, and a good sense of humor.

### **Fundraise together**

Since the cost of participating in DC Days can be as high as \$1000 per person (including airfare, lodging and food), it is important that no individual needs to raise the money alone. When local groups come together to raise the money to send representatives to DC Days, it adds to the interest and commitment of not only participants but also the community. If you have ever fundraised for a cause, you know the thrill of learning that others share your views and are willing to support your efforts. Suggestions for raising the money include:

- Find someone to donate frequent flier miles or tickets to cut your travel costs dramatically
- Find someone to host your group in DC so you won't have to pay for expensive hotels
- Ask friends and family to sponsor you, then invite them to a party or report-back after DC Days to share what you learned on your trip.
- Dances
- Art/service auctions
- Raffles
- Yard Sales
- Spaghetti dinners

- House parties
- Bowl-a-thons, Walk-a-thons, post-holiday sponsored diets, or other 'a-thons
- Phone bank your membership
- Incorporate participating in DC Days into your annual organizational plans and budgeting.

Even those who can't afford to donate in these tough economic times can make an impact by volunteering to help raise money for the trip or providing child care or petsitting while your delegation is in DC.

As always, be sure to thank your contributors and donors.

### **Reporting back to the Community**

After you return from DC remember to share what you've learned with your organization and your community. **Contact the media before you leave and while you are in DC**, to ensure local coverage of our issues and your group. A media consultant will be available in the ANA DC Days headquarters to help you with this. To get coverage, you will need to use as many media outlets as possible. There are several ways of getting your story out:

- Write an op-ed for you local newspaper
- Write an article for your newsletter
- Talk to a reporter at your local newspaper, TV station or radio station. Live call-in shows from DC or from home can be fun!
- Write letters of "Thanks" to folks who helped get you to DC and describe your experiences
- Hold a community report-back at your local library or community center: have all DC Days participants give a small presentation, then answer questions
- Write articles for other organizations' newsletters
- Give presentations to allied organizations. Churches and temples are often good places to share experiences
- Sponsor house parties where you share your slides or videos. These can be opportunities to raise funds to subsidize next year's DC Days delegation.
- Be sure to keep your members and your community updated on how your work went. If you won a major concession, be sure to let your donors know. Results speak for themselves