

Petitions 101

One of the most powerful ways to show support for a policy to reduce plastic pollution is to gather petition signatures. Presenting a successful petition to local legislators and other decision makers can be very influential.

A good petition should clearly state the position you are taking and gather important identifying information from supporters—like name, zip code, and some form of contact information. See the example petition to the right for an idea of how to create your own.



Example petition:

Researchers have found that nearly 10,000 metric tons—or 22 million pounds—of plastic debris enter the Great Lakes every year from the United States and Canada. What's worse, plastic never really goes away; it just breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces. Tiny pieces of plastic smaller than 2.5 mm have been found in the Great Lakes with concentrations as high as 1 million particles per square kilometer. These microplastics have been found in drinking water and even beer. Many microplastics are fragments of larger, single-use plastic items like beverage bottles, straws, and plastic bags. These items litter our shorelines and beaches, they can be ingested by wildlife, and now research shows they can even enter our drinking water. Communities across the Great Lakes are taking action to stop plastic pollution, and it's time we join them.

Our local waterways are an essential part of our local environment and economy. They are too precious to pollute with plastic. We the undersigned urge [insert legislator, municipality, etc.] to support a [plastic bag ban/plastic straw ban/etc.] in [your city/municipality/state].

NAME (FIRST, LAST)	ZIP CODE	PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

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You can gather petition signatures by door-knocking, tabling, or circulating through email or social media. Set a goal for how many signatures you want to get and a deadline for collecting them.

Once you have your signatures, you can deliver them to your legislators and other decision makers at public hearings, committee meetings, or other events when a proposed policy is being discussed. If there are no scheduled events appropriate to your cause, you can schedule a meeting or drop by a decision maker's office to deliver the petitions.

While the petition itself can demonstrate your community's support, you can also get creative to drive the message home. For example, if you're delivering your petition in person, consider bringing visuals or props to demonstrate the problem and emphasize the need for solutions.

