

Postcard Templates : Subject Lines, Starters, Bullets and Closers

Leona Whichard, Liz Swaringen, Jim Foster

Chatham County

March 30, 2015

How to Use These Materials

A postcard campaign is a simple and effective way to show support for a cause you believe in. Technology provides the option to send a postcard electronically in under five minutes, but research shows that the old-fashioned, hand-written postcard still turns heads and changes minds. Each method is important; just choose the one that is most comfortable for you.

We have put together a “mix and match” set of statements that allow you to select which ones you would like to use for your postcard. You can vary the statements every time you send a postcard, so it appears to be “original” when the legislator or governor sees it – less likely to be dismissed as part of a “mass mailing.” **At first glance, this may look complicated, but it’s really very simple and makes composing postcards very quick and efficient.**

The **Statements** are classified as “Subject Lines,” “Starters,” “Bullets,” and “Closers,” as explained below. To compose a handwritten postcard, just choose a starter, then a few bullets, then a closer, then sign. For electronic “postcards” (actually email messages), copy and past each statement into the email, add your name and city or county, then click “submit.” Each postcard can be different!

The **Subject Lines** are intended for email messages, to catch the legislator’s attention such that they actually open and read the email. They should be short enough that the whole statement shows in the inbox.

The **Starters** are the opening sentence to focus your reader’s attention. The first two starters below are appropriate for use with all of the themed bullets that follow. The third starter is specific to the hard numbers in the “Economic—Impact on NC” facts.

The **Bullets** are the short statements of fact that support the theme of your postcard. The bulleted format is eye-catching and impactful because it invites a quick read of key facts. The bullets are grouped by theme, and within those themes, some bullets are logically grouped as two due to the complexity of the point being made. One theme per postcard works best, and three is the ideal number of bullets per postcard. Select the themes and related bullets that are most important for you. Craft the postcard that speaks your voice.

The **Closers** are the call to action—what you want your reader to do once he or she has read your message. Like the starters, the first two closers are appropriate for use with all of the themed bullets. The third closer is more effective when sharing the “Economic—Impact on NC” facts.

The **P.S.** is provided as an optional added call-to-action that often gets read before the rest of the postcard.

The Logistics of Sending Your Postcards

Personalize your postcards by signing your name and your city or your county. You can write to any member of the General Assembly, not just those who represent your district. You can also write Gov. McCrory. Include a personal salutation: Dear Representative _____, Dear Senator _____, Dear Governor McCrory,.

For hand-written hardcopy postcards to legislators, the address to use is:

Senator (or Representative) _____
North Carolina General Assembly
16 West Jones Street
Room _____
Raleigh, NC, 27601

Look up the room number at ncleg.net-(senate (or house)-(Room, phone and email addresses. Be sure the room address includes “LB” (Legislative Building) or “LOB (Legislative Office Building), as shown with the room number on this web site. Add a stamp, and you are done.

For handwritten postcards to Governor McCrory, the address is:

Governor Pat McCrory
Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

For electronic “postcards,” follow the same sequence of clicks as above, then click on the email address for the legislator you are writing. You will get a standard email page. Then copy and paste the subject line, starter, bullets, and closer that you choose, then sign with your name and city and/or county, and hit send. (You may need to adjust the font size in the email)

For electronic “postcards” to Governor McCrory, it’s even simpler. Go to

<http://www.governor.state.nc.us/contact/email-pat>

Fill in your name and email, then copy and paste your starter, bullets and closer into the message box, then sign and click *submit*. It takes less than three minutes!

Target your postcards, by theme and by recipient, sending as many and as often as you are comfortable. You could set up a regular time on your schedule, for example, every Monday morning at 9, and take 20 minutes to send 5 or 6 postcards. Every voice makes a difference in making the case for Medicaid Expansion in North Carolina. Thanks for raising yours.

In addition to your own legislators, the most “influential” legislators that we are targeting are:

- Senator Phil Berger, President Pro Tempore (Guilford, Rockingham); Phil.Berger@ncleg.net; room 2007 LB
- Representative Tim Moore, Speaker of the House (Cleveland); Tim.Moore@ncleg.net; room 2304 LB
- Senator Tom Apodaca (Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania); Tom.Apodaca@ncleg.net; room 2010 LB
- Representative Marilyn Avila, Deputy Majority Leader (Wake); Marilyn.Avila@ncleg.net; room 2217 LB
- Representative Nelson Dollar (Wake); Nelson.Dollar@ncleg.net; room 307B LOB
- Senator Ralph Hise (Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Yancey); Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net; room 1026 LB
- Representative Donny Lambeth (Forsyth); Donny.Lambeth@ncleg.net; room 303 LB
- Senator Louis Pate (Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne); Louis.Pate@ncleg.net; room 1028LB)

The Statements

Subject Lines

Close the NC health coverage gap

NC needs health coverage for all

Health care for low income folks

Accept federal health care funds

An economic boost for NC

Give NC an economic boost

Starters

Over 300,000 North Carolinians can't get help paying for health care. All of us would benefit if everyone has access to coverage for health care.

Today, over 300,000 North Carolinians can't afford health insurance—they have been left in the coverage gap. Here are the facts:

What is it costing North Carolina to continue turning down the already allocated federal funds to provide health coverage for all low-income people?

Bullets: Grouped by Theme

Broad-brush/Multi-themed

Over half of those who can't get help actually do work, but make too little to qualify for ACA premium subsidies.

These North Carolinians also don't qualify for Medicaid. They are in the coverage gap and are left out.

Federal dollars are already committed that could be used to support a NC-specific plan that provides health care coverage for all.

This is not a new allocation. The money is ours to use or lose.

Our North Carolina leaders could create a plan that fits our own needs and make sure it includes personal responsibility.

The federal government is committed to health care for everyone and is unlikely to break their promise to pay for it.

It makes more sense to provide coverage and help people get care than it does to do nothing at all.

Compassion

Over half of these folks who can't get help actually do work, many in jobs like food service, childcare, elder care, retail, construction and tourism—jobs that rarely offer benefits.

Many without coverage are young, just getting started: families with children, young adults in school, those working several jobs, or getting the training necessary for work.

These families' lives could be ruined by huge medical bills, the leading cause of personal bankruptcy.

These folks live paycheck to paycheck, can't afford private insurance and usually end up going without even basic health care.

But they still get sick, of course, and when they do, it's harder and more expensive to treat their conditions.

Compassion – Specific to Women, Addiction Disease, Medicare

An NC-specific plan using federal funds to help cover preventive health screenings would save women's lives.

Thousands of North Carolinians who suffer from the disease of addiction would be able to get the long-term treatment they need.

Medicare recipients will not be affected at all, and our pre-Medicare older citizens ages 50 to 65 will be helped by getting affordable coverage.

Pragmatic

Over half of those who can't get help actually do work, but make too little to qualify for ACA premium subsidies.

These North Carolinians also don't qualify for Medicaid. They are in the coverage gap and are left out.

The money to pay for closing the coverage gap in NC is already set aside; if we don't use it, we lose it.

Our leaders could create a plan that fits our state's needs—with personal responsibility—and lets us opt out if it doesn't work.

A full-time job at minimum wage in North Carolina pays less than \$15,000, below the federal poverty level for a family of two or more.

Very low income childless adults are not eligible for help with health care coverage, and parents must be under 45% of the poverty level.

Denying health care coverage to our citizens who are struggling is not fair or just, and harms all of us.

The economic burden when funds for health coverage are not available adversely impacts us all.

Economic

The federal funds to pay for coverage are already designated for us.

These funds would pay all the extra costs through 2016 then taper to 90% permanently by 2020.

After 2020, North Carolina's 10% share would be more than offset by increases in tax revenues and decreases in uncompensated hospital costs and community mental health costs.

If the federal government tries to reduce their 90% commitment, we could back out.

Therefore, accepting these federal funds would be a win for our economy and a win for all our people.

Economic Self-Interest

Tax dollars from our hard-working North Carolinians are going to 28 other states to pay for their low-income health care coverage.

Bring our money back to North Carolina, so it will boost our economy and help all our people!

Keep our money in North Carolina – use it or we'll lose it!

If North Carolina loses these federal funds, we as taxpayers will still be left paying for expensive ER care for people without coverage.

Independent researchers and economists estimate that a NC-specific plan would create 43,000 NC jobs between 2016 and 2020, half of them in health care. The cost savings from increased tax revenue and decreased costs for community mental health and unreimbursed hospital care would more than off-set our state's share of the cost.

Economic: Impact on NC*

The federal funds to pay for coverage are already designated for us. North Carolina left \$2.7 billion on the table in Washington in 2014. Due to the multiplier effect, in 2014 we missed out on 23,000 new jobs, \$1.7 billion in new gross state product, \$2.7 billion in new state business activity, and \$99 million in new tax revenue. If we don't act now, between 2016 and 2020 we will lose an additional \$21 billion in federal funds, \$13.7 billion in new gross state product, \$21.5 billion in new business activity, \$862 million in new state tax revenues and tens of thousands of new jobs. The multiplier effect of these funds would give us a huge economic boost throughout our economy.

Economic Impact – Specific to ERs and Rural Hospitals

Uninsured people too often forgo preventive care and go without medications needed to manage chronic conditions. When they absolutely must seek treatment, they go to an emergency room where the care is expensive and those uncompensated costs are shifted to those who are insured. A state-specific plan that gives access to coverage could save our rural hospitals because they are losing federal payments for their disproportionate share of uncompensated care.

Closers

Let's give it a try. Please consider accepting the available federal dollars so all North Carolinians can get coverage.

Let's not wait any longer. It's time to claim the available federal dollars, devise a sound NC plan, close the gap and get all North Carolinians covered!

Please don't miss out on this economic opportunity. Let's accept these federal dollars now. *

P.S.

If we close the coverage gap, the cost of health care for everyone will go down.

*Indicates Starter/Closer most appropriate for Bullets loaded with specifics of ripple effect.