



AMERICAN CLIMATE  
LEADERSHIP AWARDS

# Chesapeake Climate Action Network: Electrify MoCo Campaign

[electrifymoco.org](http://electrifymoco.org)

This guide offers a successful stepwise model for you to replicate in your community. It is part of a series featuring the finalists of ecoAmerica's 2023 American Climate Leadership Awards.

## OVERVIEW

An essential element in reducing greenhouse gas emissions is to enact state and local policies to ensure that future buildings stop burning fossil fuels for heat, hot water, cooking, and other end uses. And, due to accessibility, local government is often an effective place for citizens to create change. Our Electrify MoCo project showed how citizens can work to ensure that future buildings are mostly electric, significantly reducing emissions, and the health risks associated with gas cooking appliances.

## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- 1. Lay the foundation:** Start by working with a council member sympathetic to climate legislation to ensure that building electrification is possible in your city or county. In some states, the law preempts local action. Collaborate with the local official to craft the text and develop a legislative strategy, including recruiting other council members to co-sponsor the bill.
- 2. Build a broad and diverse coalition:** Engage with traditional environmental allies and nontraditional allies (frontline communities, health groups, consumer groups, religious groups, justice groups, and business and labor groups), as well as other local community groups to develop and carry out the strategy. Continue to add to the coalition as the campaign progresses.
- 3. Understand councilmembers' pressure points:** Develop a power map of who or what each council member is most likely to respond positively to. Use this information to develop and record a framework campaign investment plan. Create a working campaign budget to guide investments in a ground game. Agree on increasing activity benchmarks peaking just before the final vote.

4. **Secure funding for your work:** Approach interested funders to see if they will put resources into your campaign based on your framework plan. Individual contributions have more flexibility for direct and indirect lobbying activities but foundation resources can be carefully used as well. Increase the investment budget accordingly.
5. **Make your case:** Develop strong substantive arguments, counter arguments, and other pertinent information about the legislation. Despite its importance, building electrification has not gotten the same attention level as other areas, such as solar and EVs.
6. **Create a drumbeat:** Encourage and help coalition members and other citizens to publicly testify in favor of building electrification and then meet with undecided council members. Ask willing citizens to take multiple actions throughout the campaign.
7. **Spread your message:** Implement a robust messaging ground game to the greatest degree that your resources permit — tabling, flyering, yard signs, social media, rallies, events, and turnout at council meetings.
8. **Use the media:** Reach out to traditional media to help create public attention and campaign momentum. If the budget allows, consider buying strategically targeted advertising — especially geo-targeted social media ads aimed at key council members.
9. **Escalate your campaign:** Flood council members with communications from coalition members and the public — petitions, letters, emails, texts, calls — as the vote gets closer. Plan to reach a communications peak two or three days before the vote.
10. **Implement an inside game:** Provide accurate information to council members and staff, answer questions, recruit trusted messengers according to the power map, and negotiate any possible amendments needed to pass the legislation.

Chesapeake Climate Action Network: Electrify MoCo Campaign is an ACLA 2023 Finalist. For more information and replication guides, go to [ecoAmerica.org](https://ecoAmerica.org).

ecoAmerica's American Climate Leadership Awards (ACLA) recognizes, rewards, and shares best practices on climate change advocacy and action nationwide. ACLA provides \$175,000 annually in recognition of real climate leadership. Individuals and organizations selected as finalists have achieved demonstrated success in engaging a broader diversity of Americans for climate action at local, regional, and national levels, in ways that are replicable, while prioritizing diversity, inclusion, and justice.