

# Hope-based Activism. Committee-based Voter Power.

The audacity of hope can win an election but cannot influence legislation. Until now, you and your stakeholders could only hope that lawmakers and their staffs might hear your plea to promote the right legislation for the right reasons. But a lawmaker's job is not making laws: it's getting re-elected. Show a lawmaker how to earn votes from your network and you'll out-lobby the lobbyists.

Currently, when you finally connect with a lawmaker, the dynamic is upside down: they're doing you a favor to spare a few minutes and a photo op while a staffer takes notes and the politician says he'll do what he can. But what you need is to directly influence committee work.

iVote4U engages your network to reach into the committee structure on the Hill and touch committee members where they live—their voters. This is a detailed process, it's more reliable and reproducible than relying on hope alone. Experts are available to help.

**This iVote4U guide is a recipe to motivate politicians to advance your Cause.**

## 1: Create or Join a Cause on the **Facebook Causes Application**

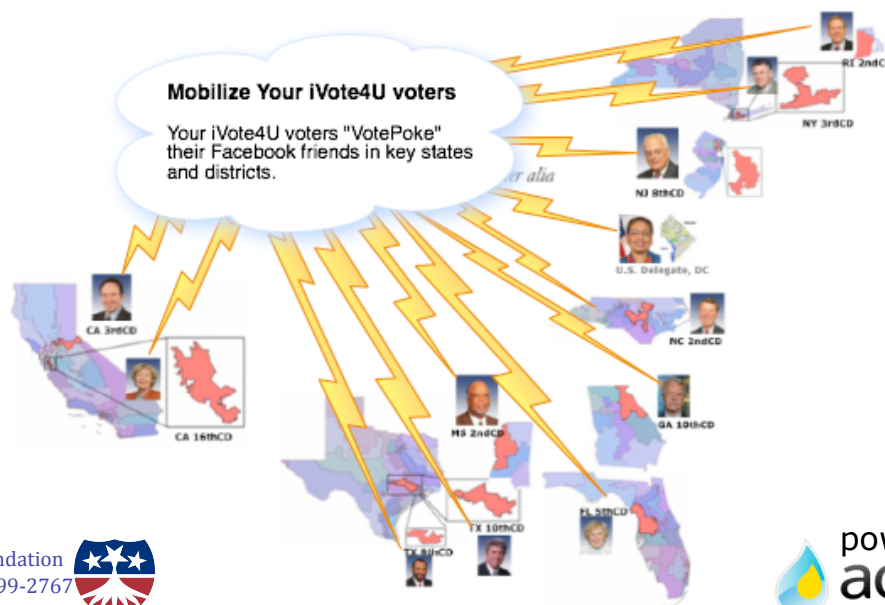
- The Facebook Causes application is a best-of-breed system for Facebook members to support causes they care about and to involve their friends.
- Many Facebook "Causes" are linked to existing non-profit sites.
- Causes can process a tax-exempt donation.
- iVote4U manages the political side of support for non-profit activism, helping you guide how politicians can support your Cause to earn vote pledges from their constituents.

## 2: Develop the **policies and issues** you want committees to discuss

- You already know these, but it's good to frame them in the context of committee business.
- Demonstrate how the issues affect the politician's state or district ([Broadband example](#)).
- Invite your network to develop the 25 most important issues to be raised in a committee meeting or hearing.
- An issue comprises a question, a followup question and supporting materials.

## 3: Identify **key politicians**

- Discover which politicians influence the committees and hearings affecting your cause.
- Which Senators or representatives sit on the key committees?
- Invite your stakeholders to reach out to their friends who are constituents of key politicians.



#### 4: Grow a **network of champions**

- iVote4U voters use Google to certify their residency in a politician's jurisdiction.
- iVote4U voters publicize their interest in a cause.
- They create "vote bombs" to build blocs of voters pledged to vote for their representative in the next election if he supports your cause.

### Richard J. Durbin

United States Senator, IL, Senior Seat  
Democrat

1,924 days to next election

- ★ Pledge Your Vote
- ★ Become a Super Voter

- ★ Pledge Your Money
- ★ Start a Vote Bomb
- Send a Cause

EXPRESS YOUR  
Wow! | Good | OK | ?

#### Send your Cause to Richard J. Durbin

##### Choose a Cause to send:

- Womens Health Foundation (link)
- Free Postage For All Military (link)
- The Nature Conservancy (link)
- THE RACE TO END CANCER (link)
- Stop Global Warming (link)
- Protect a Woman's Right to Choose (link)
- Support our Troops (link)

##### OR: Enter a URL from Causes on Facebook

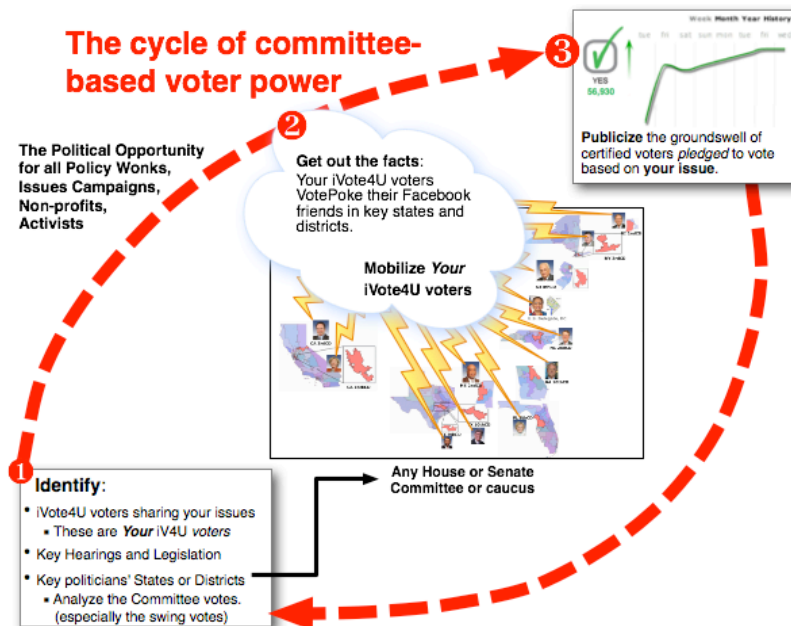
Send Cause!

Your membership grows when given something to do and they're more loyal when their contributions matter.

iVote4U borrows some techniques from the Obama campaign to engage your members to affect their politicians' actions and votes.

#### 5: Accelerate the movement by publicizing its growth

- iVote4U presents dynamic data about voter opinions and actions to provide concrete evidence of your cause's growing voter power.
- This will get the attention of politicians and media, attracting new voters into the movement who will then help with the work of your campaign.



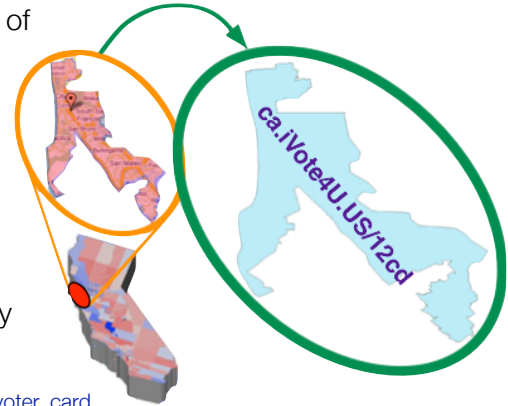
There's a thrill to a policy campaign that may energize your members as much as their support for your cause. Your iVote4U campaign encourages them to:

- Research issues
- Develop policy
- Draft legislation
- Organize activists
- Support and Inform their politicians.

## Overview of the iVote4U Federation

iVote4U comprises a Facebook application\* and a network of virtual political jurisdictions, the most comprehensive being 435 virtual congressional districts, mapped to each of the federal congressional districts.

In this example: California's 12<sup>th</sup> congressional district takes the form <http://ca.ivote4u.us/12cd>. As voters in a virtual district find a place where grievances and agendas can be "pushed" to politicians and staffs, we can expect participation to grow, since social networks grow when they have something to do.



\*[http://apps.facebook.com/ivote4u/main/voter\\_card](http://apps.facebook.com/ivote4u/main/voter_card)

## The iVote4U Facebook App: turning stealth voters into Super Voters

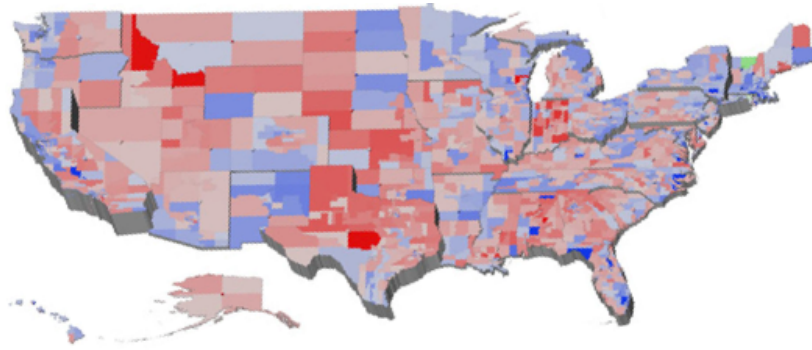
The iVote4U app on Facebook offers voters an engaging, iTunes-like dashboard to manage their collection of politicians as easily as they manage their collection of music.

iVote4U equips members to associate real-world political consequences with the causes and issues they care about. iVote4U members express their regard for their politicians continuously, between elections:

- Signal support or disdain with Yes-No clicks
- Signal their mood with emoticons.  
Wow! | Good | OK | ??? | frown | Cry | Angry!
- Pledge their votes for or against a politician  
A calendar appointment with a ballot box.
- Create Vote Bombs:  
"Let's Pledge 250 new votes by Monday."
- Invite friends to manage their own politicians.
- Send Causes to their politicians.  
From the popular Facebook Causes application 25 million members and growing.
- Pledge money to politicians.  
Based on actions in committee or on the floor.
- Certify as constituents so politicians listen  
Via Google and Sunlight Foundation APIs.



## *The iVote4U Network of Political Networks*



A network of 435 virtual congressional districts, 50 states and 100 Senate seats

The iVote4U Facebook app helps voters realize they can influence two senators and a congressperson. Introduced to those jurisdictions, Voters can literally join those jurisdictions and start to influence policy, directly and continuously, between elections.

This membership in a virtual district or state, with direct and continuous guidance of politicians is unprecedented but is a logical next step following the equally unprecedented designation of voters as proactive members of the Dean and Obama campaigns. It's unexpected but not surprising that governance should be modeled on campaigns, since everything that happens in government is the result of a campaign, large or small, most of them conducted out of public view. iVote4U equips voters to start and conduct their own campaigns, supporting their own agendas.

These members are uniquely qualified to influence their politicians because they are certified as Super Voters. Through a combination of Google and Sunlight Foundation APIs, the billing address of a Super Voter is unequivocally located in its home district and state, elevating the voter from an irrelevant complaint in an email to a constituent in an auditable voting bloc sizable and visible enough to matter to politicians and staffs. These blocs are sophisticated enough to vote in primary elections, where political careers start and where they go to die.

The iVote4U federation can be the best place to start a political career, to "buy" votes through the simple act of collaborating, and where old-school politicians founder and die.

On July 17, 2009, Acquia Inc. committed to host and support the iVote4U federation on a best-of-breed Drupal platform. Imagine that Linus Torvalds had co-founded Red Hat: that's Acquia for the Drupal community, managing an open source distribution qualified as a benchmark of the most useful and reliable Drupal modules. Acquia is beginning to build communities for the federal government – public-private partnerships in the truest sense – and they see the iVote4U federation as the hope of a 21<sup>st</sup> century democracy.

