

How-to guide:



Drop off the nature laws petition to your Member of Parliament or Senator

FIRST THINGS FIRST: THANK YOU!

Thank you for being one of the incredible ACF community members who have put their hand up to drop off the petition for strong nature laws to your Member of Parliament (MP) or Senator.

In 2022, we made some strides forward for nature and our climate – but the work to achieve the ambition from governments and business we need is really only just beginning!

The Albanese Government's response to the once-in-a-decade review of our national environment laws in December was a good starting point – an important first step towards tackling Australia's extinction crisis. But now we need to push the government to step up and actually introduce strong laws to protect nature, with the funding to restore it.

One way you can encourage your MP or Senator to be a champion for nature is to drop off the petition calling for strong nature laws – signed by *500,000+ people* across Australia – to their offices.

This guide will take you through how to drop off the petition to your MP or Senator's office.

Together we can get the government action we need to bring our bush, rivers and unique animals back from the brink.

In this guide:

Step one: Prepare to drop off the petition

Decide on which decision-maker's office you'd like to drop the petition off to.

Step two: Visit your MP or Senator's office

Print out your petition package and drop it off at your MP or Senator's office.

Step three: Report back to ACF

Report back to ACF that you dropped the petition off, so we can measure our collective impact!

Frequently asked questions

Check out answers to questions about this activity.



STEP ONE: PREPARE TO DROP OFF THE PETITION

Firstly, have a read through this short guide!

Then decide which elected representative you would like to hand the petition to.

For community members who have a local MP who is part of the government (in the Labor Party), we encourage you to concentrate on them. For community members who don't have a local MP part of the government, we encourage you to focus on one of your Labor Senators so that members of our government in the Senate are also engaged.

You may wish to concentrate on a different party member (e.g. Coalition, Independent), that's also very welcome – it's important that all members of our Parliament understand the need for strong nature laws, whatever their party! If you are not sure who your MP is you can look them up on the [Australian Electoral Commission website](#). You can find your Senators on the [Parliament of Australia website](#).

Decide on which decision-maker's office you'd like to drop the petition off at.

Next it's helpful to check the opening hours of your elected representative's office. Because of the pandemic, some offices still have staff working from home at times. So don't assume the office will be open standard business hours. Have a look online to see if you can find the office opening hours, and if you can't find this information simply pick up the phone – call your elected representative's office and ask them what days/times they are open to community members.

After you have this information about opening hours, decide on what day and time you will deliver the petition. You'll need about 10 minutes to deliver the petition.

Think about if you would like to bring a friend, family member, or colleague with you – visiting your elected representative's office is more fun and powerful if you have at least one other person with you.

Let your elected representative know that you are coming. See email template below.

EMAIL TEMPLATE TO NOTIFY MP/SENATOR'S OFFICE OF YOUR VISIT

Once you have decided when to drop by the office, aim to send an email to your MP or Senator's office at least one week beforehand.

You can use/adapt this template.

Hi *[insert MP or Senator's name]*,

My name is *[insert your name]* and I live at *[insert your address so they know that you live in the area they represent.]*

On *[insert day and time of your visit]*, I will drop by your office to deliver a national petition for strong nature laws, signed by over 500,000 people across Australia.

Will you be available to quickly meet me to receive the petition on *[reiterate the day and time of your visit]?* I would appreciate the opportunity to hand the petition directly to you and get the chance to share why I care.

Otherwise I'll be happy to leave it with your staff for you to collect.

Kind regards,

[Insert your full name here]

STEP TWO: VISIT YOUR MP OR SENATOR'S OFFICE

On the day, remember to bring:

- ☐ The [printed petition package](#) for your MP/Senator.
- ☐ (Optional) A copy of the [personalised message template](#) to fill in, plus some extras if you've invited others to join you
- ☐ A smartphone or camera to grab a photo

When you are ready, head into the MP or Senator's reception area:

- **Introduce yourself and any friends/family that have joined you.** Explain that you are a community member/group of community members concerned about stopping nature destruction and you are here today to hand over a petition signed by 500,000+ people calling for strong nature laws.
- **Hand over the petition package and your personalised message/s to reception.** You could ask the staff if they know much about how nature is in trouble. If they say no, you could point them to the facts and solutions on the petition package.
- **Thank the staff for their time, and reiterate your request for them to hand the petition package and personalised messages to your MP/Senator as soon as they can.**

If your MP or Senator comes out to meet you or happens to walk in as you are there, seize this opportunity! Introduce yourselves, hand over the petition and ask if they will speak up for strong nature laws and an independent regulator to enforce them. You could also ask if you can get a photo of them with your group and/or the petition package. Even a short conversation or interaction can have a big impact!

Optional talking points with your MP or Senator:

- I am/we are here today as Australian Conservation Foundation community members. ACF is a community of over half a million people all across the country, speaking out for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the places and wildlife we love. My name is [reintroduce yourself] and I care about stopping nature destruction because [share your reasons in 1-3 sentences.]
- I/we want every single member of our government to deliver new nature laws to stop nature destruction and restore the places that have been damaged.
- This is a petition summary with 500,000+ signatures calling for strong nature

- laws and an independent regulator to enforce them.
- Nature protection is a big local priority. Will you speak up for strong nature laws and an independent regulator to enforce them?

After the visit, make sure to capture a photo – take a selfie or nicely ask a passer-by to take a picture of you. Try to include the MP/Senator’s office or sign in the background so others can see where you are!

If you have friends or family with you, please inform people that the photo will be used as part of a collection to show just how many people are out delivering this petition to our elected representatives. If a person in your group is not comfortable being in the photo, assure them that’s okay – perhaps they could take the photo of the rest of you.



STEP THREE: REPORT BACK TO ACF

- ☐ Complete the [ACF feedback form](#) to let us know how you went.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does it mean to drop off the petition?

You’ll pick a time and date for your visit, let the MP or Senator’s office know you are coming, then head along with some friends or family to hand over the petition package to the MP or Senator’s staff.

Can I do this on the weekend?

It's best to visit throughout the work week, so the MP or Senator's office is open and you can tell their staff why you are dropping by.

What resources will ACF provide?

We have created a [custom petition package](#) for all federal electorates that contains:

- A summary of the number of people who have signed the petition nationally, in your state/territory and in your electorate (the latter for local MP events only)
- Powerful information on local plants, animals and places that are threatened
- An ask for your MP/Senator to speak up for strong nature laws and an independent regulator to enforce them

We have also created a [personalised message template](#) to fill in, reflecting on why you care about our rivers, forests, wildlife and communities. Hand this over with your petition package to the MP/Senator. If you have friends or family come with you, be sure to print a copy of the personalised message template for them to fill in too.

What do I do if I turn up at my MP or Senator's office and they are closed?!

It's important to check the opening hours of your MP or Senator's office before deciding on the time/date of your visit. Some offices still have staff working from home at times, so it's good to give the office a call first and ask what days and hours they are open to the community. You could also see if you can find this information online.

If you get to the office and it is unexpectedly closed, that's okay! Make a plan for how you will get this information to your MP/Senator. Is there a post box you can leave it in? Will you take a photo of the petition and email it to the MP/Senator?