

## LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

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Almost every bill that comes into my mailbox contains content designed to promote a political agenda. My city water bill, my electricity bill, my natural gas bill, and even my home and auto insurance bills contain regular content designed to alter the political landscape. No, they are not asking me to support a particular political candidate or a political party—these messages are more subtle than that—but they are no less powerful.

These politically persuasive messages usually fall into one of two categories. Less frequently, they tell me of the necessity of some political solution that I should support. For example, my health insurance company has promoted the necessity of health care reform. Although it didn't specify the exact reforms that I should support, its timing seemed to lend support to the bill that was working through Congress at that time. My auto insurance company included an insert advocating for a ballot proposition that would increase government control of the insurance system.

More frequently, these messages are designed to convince me of the existence of a particular problem. More often than not, these "problems" are the political rationale for current political agendas. In fact, most of these problems are either scientifically dubious or completely contrived issues that exist only to drive a set of public policy objectives. In the last decade, these "problems" have centered on pollution, global warming, and climate change.

When the entity doing the advocacy is a private company, I absolutely support their freedom to express their opinion. At the same time, their customers are equally free to express to that company their disagreement. It doesn't take very many customer disagreements to cause a business to re-think its positions—or at least the aggressiveness with which it promotes these positions.

When the entity is a public (government) agency, however, this kind of advocacy is inappropriate. After all, they are using my tax dollars to promote an agenda that I don't support. Again, these agencies should hear from constituents who disagree with their advocacy.

The next time you see a government agency or even a private company advocating a dangerous agenda (whether directly or indirectly), take the time to call or write them and complain. It will make a difference.

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