



***Our Secular Decade
Goals and Tactics***

*Sean Faircloth, Executive Director
Secular Coalition for America*

Goals for Secular Americans in the 2010s

In this decade secular Americans will claim a major national leadership role, becoming an undeniable political force that must be taken into account by elected officials and policymakers. We will know when we have passed this threshold when these goals are achieved:

- 1) National reporters will instinctively seek quotes and analysis from SCA about public policies privileging religion—just as now they seek ACLU quotes on civil liberties.
Goal date: 12-31-2012.
- 2) Our stands on issues such as the protection of children from religiously-based abuse, military discrimination, and emergency contraception are automatically understood by the general media to be a call for civil rights and justice based on a compassionate adherence to a rational worldview.
Goal date: 12-31-2013
- 3) Thousands more people become active dues-paying members of Coalition organizations, spurred by the enthusiasm and pride that comes from joining a great civil rights movement. We will take a reasonable measure of the cumulative membership level of all Coalition organizations. That cumulative total shall increase by the thousands.
Goal date: 12-31-2014.
- 4) Ten or more Members of Congress will state publicly they are nontheist.
Goal date: 01-02-2019.

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SCA: A Policy Catalyst for Secular Success

Public policy is a pivotal unifying force by which the SCA will diversify our constituency and increase our base of activists. Why?

- **Unity.** Policy is a key coalition-building tool, and one of our greatest sources of unity. Secularists internally debate many issues, but our diverse coalition unites when it comes to almost all matters of public policy. Lobbying and grassroots advocacy on public policy will drive the success of our movement. It is our central strategy.
- **Growth.** In addressing substantive issues that affect real people in their real lives, our public policy positions will help broaden the base of our coalition groups. We will champion causes and principles around which our community can rally and which will inspire new members to join the movement.

In order to achieve our goals and meet our challenges, SCA will speak out more compellingly to more people on more issues. An orchestrated strategy of compelling policy issues will drive our movement forward. In doing so, we will present the secular movement more professionally and in more diverse venues, backed by a stronger grassroots infrastructure for which SCA will be a prime catalyst.

We will earn media attention by passionately and knowledgably addressing religiously-based injustice to real people—injustices that connect on a gut level with an emotional impact.

SCA will use public policy to connect secularism with the American people, appealing to the American sense of justice, freedom, and fairness. Our policy goals and tactics are central to building a cohesive coalition.

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Eight Tactics That Will Lead Us to Our Secular Goals.

- 1) **Expanded Issue Base:** SCA will research, draft, and produce well-articulated positions on a greater variety of issues concerning church-state separation and the privileging of religion. The Executive Director will spearhead more policy goals, and work with staff to produce more policy positions.
- 2) **Increased Lobbying Effort:** SCA will spend more time directly lobbying the federal government.
- 3) **Communications Products that Connect:** SCA will produce quality communications products that reach more people and connect emotionally, including online and print materials targeted to reach like-minded potential supporters. Coalition organizations can use these products as jumping-off points for communication with their members
- 4) **More Robust Networking:** SCA will help to network secular activists by making more effective use of blogs, web event postings, Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking platforms.
- 5) **The 50-State Strategy:** In 2010 SCA will begin a grassroots effort leading to active volunteer advocacy networks in ten to twenty states by December 2012, and fifty states before December 2019. Activists will be trained to make a strong secular case on federal issues and given guidance on how to approach secular state issues on their own. The goal of this effort is to **draw in new people who will be encouraged to join Coalition organizations.** Member organizations will interact and collaborate within each state, further knitting our coalition together.
- 6) **Outreach to Broaden our Base:** SCA will seek to enlist the “apatheistic” and the functionally secular in order to encourage more demographic diversity for our movement. We will appeal more to women and younger people and enlist them for leadership roles, as well as increasing outreach to other potentially sympathetic groups such as scientists, libertarians, and gay nontheists. Our communications/development team will be enlisted to get our message before these groups, and will frame issues with these goals in mind. **All of the above newer demographics will be encouraged to join member organizations.**

- 7) **Public Policy Summit:** SCA will hold a biennial summit in 2011. The summit will be tailored specifically to public policy issues, rather than on topics already covered very well by other secular movement events, such as freethought heroes, philosophical issues, or evolution. The summit will focus on strategic policy education, interaction, and planning, including:
- a. Collaboration among media, communication, and publication staff to achieve common strategies.
 - b. Collaboration among our secular lawyers to achieve common strategies.
 - c. Trainings that cultivate young professionals for policy and organizational leadership.
 - d. Member organizations will have the opportunity to cultivate new potential leaders.
 - e. The opportunity for Coalition group leaders to meet and cultivate young professionals, interns and grassroots organizers for board service and other leadership roles.
 - f. Grassroots advocates will have a venue to compare notes and strategies, as well as interact with member organization leaders).
 - g. Presenters focusing specifically on the policy, legislative, and political aspects of secularism.
- 8) **Internship Program:** The Internship Program will allow nontheist college students interested in public policy to gain experience on Capitol Hill.

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This is our Decade

2010 is an exciting year, but 2019 will be even more exciting, because we will have achieved the secular goals set out in 2010.

We believe strongly in a rational worldview. The compassion and decency in our worldview leaves no one out, even those with whom we disagree. This plan will lead Secular Americans to our rightful national leadership role.

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Sean Faircloth, Executive Director of Secular Coalition for America, presented this plan for approval by the board of Secular Coalition for America on January 10, 2010.

The board approved unanimously.