



From Pitch to Publication: Proven Tactics to Get Media Coverage

More than 300,000 domestic workers in California — including nannies, housekeepers, and caregivers — are still excluded from state occupational safety laws, which require employers to maintain basic safety standards. It’s a shocking oversight, but thankfully, it may soon change with the introduction of a set of safety guidelines and Senate Bill 686, [the Health and Safety for All Workers Act](#). If the bill passes, domestic workers will finally receive the equal rights and protections they deserve.



Domestic Workers line up in front of the California State Capitol to demonstrate their support for SB 686 the Health and Safety for All Workers Act. Photo Credit: Brooke Anderson.

When the California Domestic Workers Coalition (CDWC) approached LightBox Collaborative to help announce the bill’s launch, we knew just which collaborator to call: [Janine Shimomura](#), a strategic communications expert with a proven track record in legislative and statewide advocacy.

Thanks to Janine’s smart media outreach strategies, the California Domestic Workers Coalition’s work received prominent coverage in dozens of major outlets including [NPR](#), the [Associated Press](#), and the [San Francisco Chronicle](#).

We recently sat down with Janine to hear her top tips on winning media coverage.

Tip 1: Spend the time to cultivate relationships with reporters

For Janine, having existing relationships with certain reporters — and approaching other reporters the California Domestic Workers Coalition had previously worked with — proved invaluable.

“I think any good press list starts with who you already know, but also doing research on who else is writing about the topic,” she says. “It’s also key to understand how to link your topic to the coverage they’ve done in the past, even if the link doesn’t seem obvious at first.”

By spending the effort to build [and maintain these media connections](#), you establish credibility and increase the chances of securing media coverage.

Tip 2: Use values and stories as a basis for your messaging

“I used values-focused messaging to stress the [historic injustice of domestic worker exclusion from worker safety laws](#), in part because it was important to the California Domestic Workers Coalition but also because I knew it would resonate with lawmakers,” Janine explains.

Janine’s strategy also involved crafting a strong narrative that highlighted domestic workers’ ongoing fight for their rights and safety. This narrative has helped the bill stand out.

This strategy included providing access to the domestic worker leaders who [shared their personal experiences](#) about the reality of domestic work and why health and safety protections are so important to them and their communities.

“Reporters want to tell compelling stories about the real-world impact of legislation,” she says. “It’s a strong communication strategy when we base our messaging on values and personal narratives”

Tip 3: Go deep on the issue to stand out

To craft a compelling pitch, it’s essential to delve deep into the issue at hand.

“Whether it’s a bill or a new piece of research, try to understand the nuances of the issue and what differentiates it from other announcements. That helps make a strong pitch and ensures you’re pointing the reporters to as many resources from the outset as possible,” Janine suggests.

“At the start of a legislative session, reporters are always trying to understand how far a bill will proceed and also what makes this bill stand out from the thousands of other bills,” she adds.

“It takes a bit more time, but the end result is well worth it.”

Take action: The California Senate [just passed the Health and Safety for All Workers Act](#) (next stop: the Assembly) but the fight for domestic workers’ right to safe workplaces continues. Stay up to date on the latest news and ways to get involved with the California Domestic Workers Coalition [here](#).



LightBox Collaborator Deborah Zuniga Goldberg eagerly awaits the day when she reads the news about the passing of the Health and Safety for All Workers Act. Is your organization ready to take your media outreach to the next level? We'll put together the perfect team to get your cause the coverage it deserves. Get in touch: info@lightboxcollaborative.com

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