

# Making Your Voice Heard

Training #2



Natural Resources  
Council of Maine

Protecting the Nature of Maine





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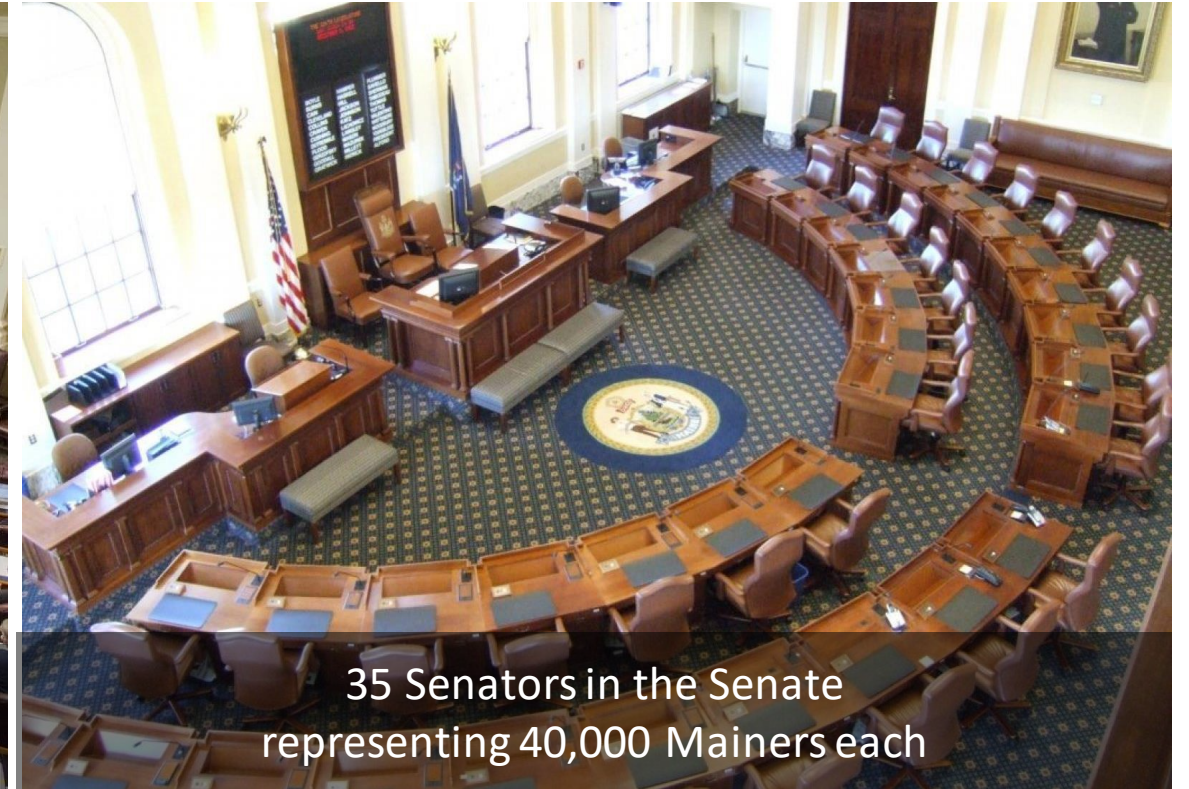
# NRCM Outreach Team

Participants – Please introduce yourself in the chat, sharing your name and where you're zooming in from tonight.

# What to Expect

- Welcome and introductions
- Section 1:
  - Who are Maine legislators and how are they persuaded?
  - Strategies to communicate effectively with your state legislators
  - Q&A
- Section 2:
  - Small breakout groups – deeper dive on communications strategies
    - Crafting strong testimony, in-person lobbying, and writing LTEs
- Closing

# Maine State Legislature



# Who are Maine legislators?

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# When can you weigh in?

**Lawmaker is elected**



**Introduce yourself to your lawmaker & suggest issues of concern to lawmaker for bill ideas**

**Committee hosts public hearing and work session**



**Show up to a public hearing, testify live, or submit written testimony**

# When can you weigh in?

**Committee votes on bill**



- Call, email, or meet with your lawmaker before committee or floor votes and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same
- Write and submit letters to the editor to your local paper
- Take actions like signing petitions with NRCM or other advocacy organizations
- Lobby your lawmaker in the statehouse (like at NRCM's State House Action Day!)

**House and Senate vote on bill**



**Bill gets sent to the Governor's desk**



**Call or email the governor to support or oppose the bill**

**Bill becomes law or bill fails**



**Call or email your legislator to thank them or express your disappointment**

# Best Practices

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- Make a personal connection
- Tell a story - speak from the heart
- Identify the bill LD # or title
- Consider yourself the expert
- Always tell the truth
- Make a clear ask
- Follow up after the vote





# Contact Your Legislators

- Legislators publicly share their personal contact information
- Send them an email
- Pick up the phone
- Write a hand-written letter and mail to their home address
- Lawmakers rarely hear from folks in their district

The Maine House of Representatives | Your Resource for Legislative Information

> **Member Profile**



**Jessica L. Fay**  
(Jess)  
State Representative  
( D - Raymond )

✉ [Jessica.Fay@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Jessica.Fay@legislature.maine.gov)  
141 Spiller Hill Road, Raymond, ME 04071  
**Home:** (207) 655-5020  
**Seat Number:** 47      **House District:** 86 - ([View Map](#))  
**Town(s):** Poland (Part) / Casco (Part) / Frye Island / Raymond (Part)  
**Committee(s):**

# Letters to the Editor and Op Eds

- Letters = 250 word max
- Op Eds = 650 word max
- Elected officials read the opinion section
- Daily and weekly papers
- Submit online
- Educate your neighbors
- Share published piece with your lawmakers

EDITORIALS | BANGOR DAILY NEWS | FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2004

## Bangor Daily News

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### SPECIAL DELIVERY

The last time the U.S. Post Office was reformed a first-class stamp cost 6 cents, the postmaster general was a member of the president's Cabinet and the world's first e-mail wouldn't be sent for another year. That was 34 years ago, the Postal Service is now only a part of a \$900 billion a year industry it used to own — a part that is losing mail volume even as the number of potential customers expands — meaning that it is a shrinking part. An overhaul has been overdue, but only this year has it seemed likely.

That's partly because the president's commission on postal reform last year found nearly three dozen ways the service could be improved and the General Accounting Office concluded the \$90 billion unfunded liability carried by USPS made it urgent that Congress enact "fundamental reforms to minimize the risk of a significant taxpayer bailout or dramatic postal rate increases." Congress is ready to act, too: A bill by Sens. Susan Collins and Thomas Carper takes up the concerns of these two reports, reasserts the necessity of universal access to service and overhauls the review process for rate increases.

Two major changes are financial. The bill, called the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2004, reveals

who are retired members of the military. The bill would change that, a move worth \$27 billion to the postal service. It would also switch those workers over age 65 who are receiving workers' comp onto to its retirement system.

The rate-setting process takes about 18 months, which is too long a time for the USPS to respond to changing market conditions. Under the bill, a cap is set for classes of mail and rates can change within 30 to 45 days. Cross subsidy of products is prohibited but the re-empowered USPS board of governors would have more flexibility in setting the rates. The authority would also come with new responsibilities for making the decisions transparent to Congress.

These reforms have been widely supported by postal unions, a multitude of businesses dependent on mailings and government reformers because they can see what Sen. Collins put well: "The postal service is at risk of a 'death spiral' of decreasing volume and increasing rates that lead to further decreases in volume."

The bill is scheduled to be marked up in the Governmental Affairs Committee during the first week of June, where Sen. Collins is chairman and several members of both parties have



Chris Madden

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Christians and the war

It's too bad Charlotte C. Herbold's letter "Christian outcry" (RDN, May 21) which criticized the Christian churches for their seeming silence or support for President Bush's war in Iraq didn't differentiate among the spectrum of Christian attitudes

demand to return Palestinian land shows a clear and troubling bias in favor of the government of Israel over the land ownership rights of the Palestinians people. A shift that much of the Muslim world claimed we would do.

We can't do much to change others — we know that — other than cutting funding and supplies

public-access issues — they are police issues. We have laws against all of these things.

Another more relevant issue was the fact that Branch Pond is Ellsworth's main source of drinking water; and their concern about pollution. Because the vast number of watercraft on the pond are owned by camp owners, who refuse

# Direct Lobbying

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- At the State House
- Outside House/Senate chamber or outside a committee room
- Direct one-on-one or with a small group
- Seek opportunities locally - constituent hours or public forums

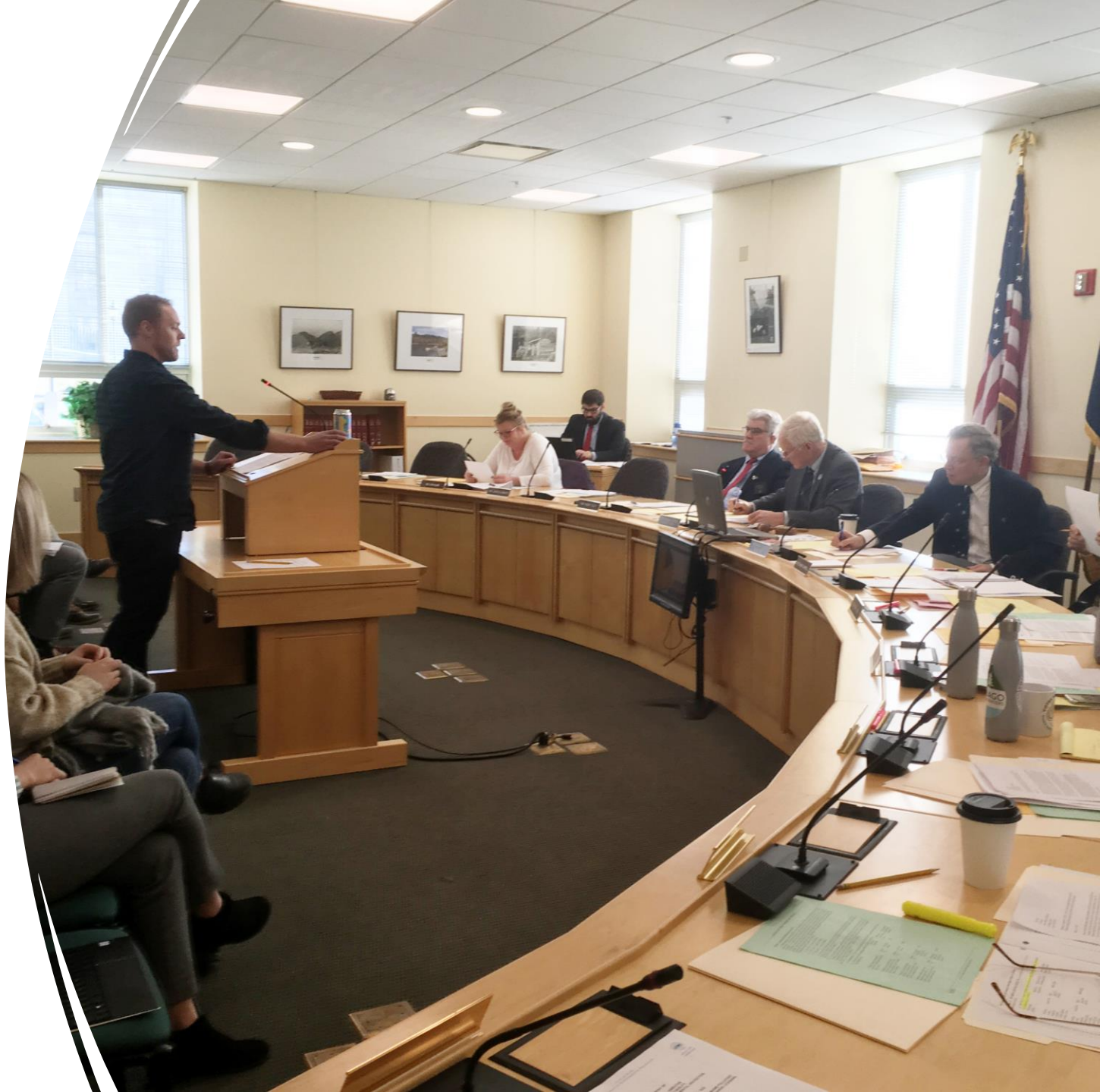




# Testify at a Public Hearing

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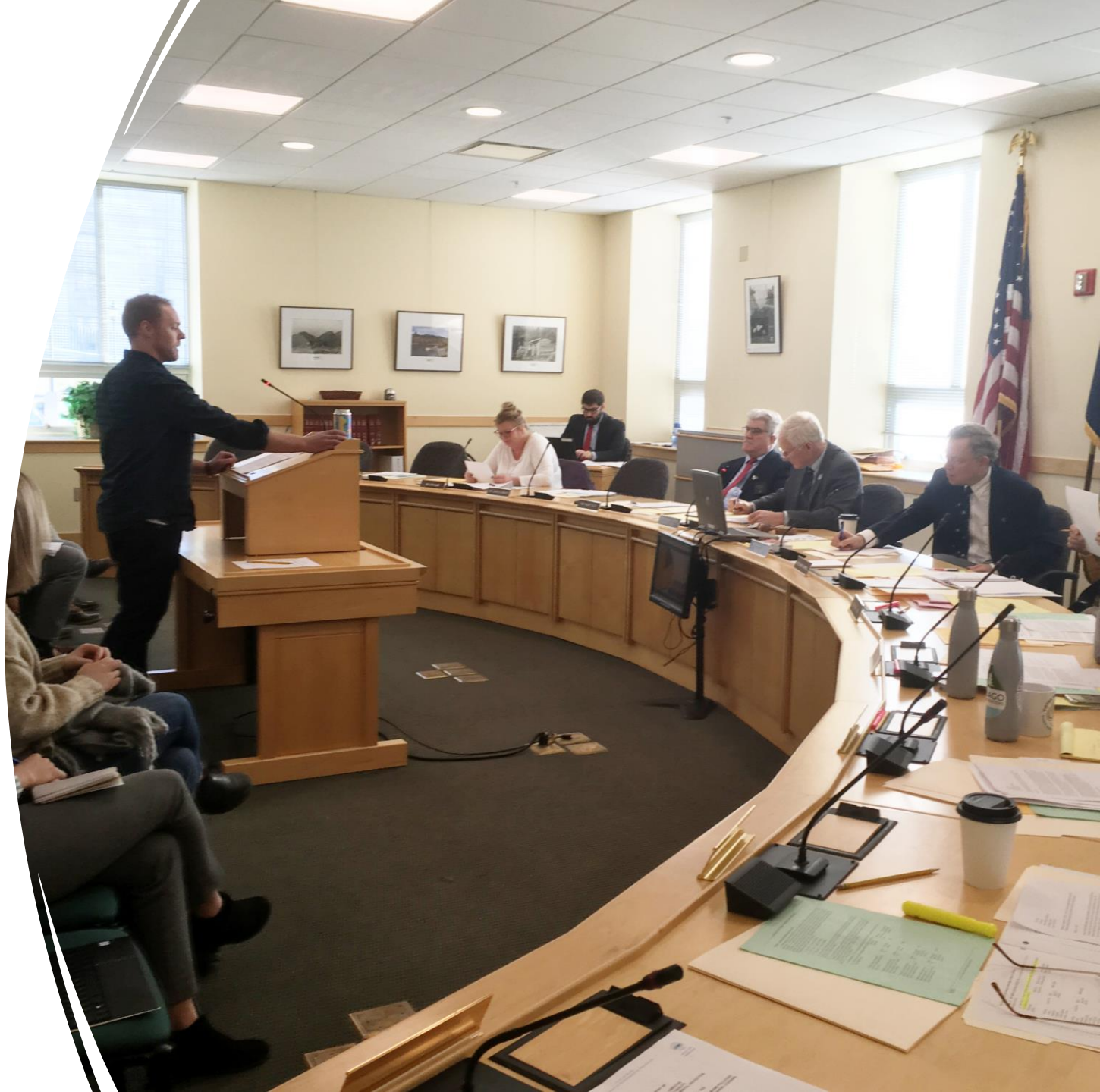
- Write and practice in advance
- Print 25 copies
- Stick to three minutes
- Speak with confidence
- Maintain eye contact
- Virtual and written testimony accepted



# Testify at a Public Hearing

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- Start by addressing the two committee chairs
- Identify the bill number, title, and your position
- Tell a story. Make a personal connection.
- Make a clear ask
- Ask for any questions



# Accountability

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- Look for legislative scorecards
- Thank legislators for good votes
- Express disappointment in bad votes
- Consider public and private methods



# Resources

- <https://legislature.maine.gov/>
  - Legislator contact information
  - Event calendar (public hearings)
  - Bill tracking
- NRCM's take action page, which is home to:
  - Active petitions and opportunities to contact your legislators
  - Finding your legislator's contact info and tips to contact them
  - NRCM's bill tracking page
  - Tips and how-to's on testifying
  - Tips and how-to's for writing letters-to-the-editor

[www.nrcm.org/get-involved/take-action/](http://www.nrcm.org/get-involved/take-action/)

## Action Alerts and Petitions

Take action on our current priorities here.

Power Maine's Future with Offshore Wind



Add Your Voice

Support a Free-Flowing Kennebec River



Add Your Voice

## Contact Your Elected Officials

Contacting your legislators or other elected officials is an effective way to make your voice heard and to influence their votes on issues that are important to you.

Find Your State Legislators & Contact Info



Tips for Contacting Your Legislator

Find Members of Congress & Contact Info



Meet Legislators at State House Action Day





# Questions?



# Closing



## **Takeaways**

There are lots of opportunities for public input.

You and others in your community can influence legislative outcomes.



## **NRCM is a resource**

Look for our email with links to additional resources.



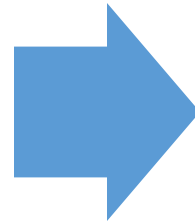
## **Feedback welcome**

Please fill out our survey.

# Upcoming Trainings

**January 5**  
Building People Power

To pass new laws, we need more people to get involved. Learn how to talk to your family and friends about issues you care about.



**Mid-January**  
Current Priorities and Taking Action

As the legislative session kicks off, learn about NRCM's current priorities and the best ways to be involved.

THANK  
YOU

The text "THANK YOU" is presented in a playful, rounded font. The word "THANK" is on the top line and "YOU" is on the bottom line. The letters are colored in a gradient: 'T' and 'K' are blue, 'H' and 'O' are green, and 'A' and 'U' are yellow-green. A decorative border of a green vine with small leaves surrounds the text. Dashed lines are visible within the letters 'H', 'A', and 'O'.