

Influencers



Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

House and nonprofit groups to round up congressional support for the Iran deal. “Few advocates really can marry those two skills together.”

Gould’s efforts included directly lobbying lawmakers and their staffs, as well as rallying activists to attend over 50 constituent meetings during the August recess, tracking whip counts in Congress, getting letters-to-the-editor in support of the deal in newspapers in all 50 states and shepherding a letter to Congress signed by 53 Christian leaders in support of the agreement.

“One of the things that is most impressive about Kate is her commitment and enthusiasm,” says Kelsey Davenport, director for nonproliferation policy at the Arms Control Association.

Prior to working for the Quaker lobby, Gould was director of advocacy and outreach at Just Foreign Policy, a group pushing for liberal U.S. foreign policies, and worked as an intern for Democratic Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon.

She says her belief in “that of God in every human being” guides her work for peace, and she spent several years living and working in the Middle East. Her work included teaching English to Palestinian school teachers and coordinating a radio program produced by the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information.

Building support for the Iran deal, however, has been an experience all on its own, she says. “It’s been amazing to see how the citizen advocacy work is really working.”

— Rachel Oswald

FOREIGN POLICY

Quaker vs. Goliath

The Quakers don’t fit the stereotypical image of high-powered lobbyists.

But these peacemakers, led by Kate Gould, just claimed victory in the most hard-fought battle in Washington, after enough Senate Democrats pledged to uphold the Iran nuclear agreement negotiated by President Barack Obama.

Gould, a registered lobbyist, is the legislative associate for Middle East policy at the Friends Committee on National Legislation, where for the past four years she has led the group’s advocacy regarding Iran, as well as Iraq, Syria, Israel and Palestine.

Despite furious lobbying and millions of dollars spent on na-

tional television ads to oppose the Iran deal, this young Quaker helped mobilize a diverse group of grassroots activists, nuclear nonproliferation experts and faith-based groups to win the backing of at least 34 Senate Democrats. Even if the Republican-led Congress passes a resolution of disapproval to block the agreement in the coming weeks, Obama’s veto would be sustained.

“Securing 34 Senate votes for the Iran nuclear accord to move forward is a victory for the clear majority of Americans who want to see their lawmakers let diplomacy work,” says Gould, 31, who got her first taste for political advocacy more than a de-

cade ago as a student at Western Washington University deeply involved in the anti-Iraq War movement.

According to people closely involved in congressional advocacy in favor of the Iran deal, Gould has been a critical player doing behind-the-scenes organizing work.

“Kate has one of those rare talents: she understands that these issues are deeply cared about across the country and, importantly, knows how to help grassroots communities bring their voices to Washington,” says Joy Drucker, a former deputy assistant secretary of State for House affairs and now a consultant working with the White