

Tips for Writing Legislators and Local Elected Officials:

Writing is one of the most effective means of getting your message across to your legislator and you can do it in just a few minutes. Your letter documents your views, and it reminds your legislators that their decisions have a direct impact on you and their other constituents.

- Use the correct address and salutation, e.g., Dear Representative (Last Name)
- Type or write your letter clearly so that it is legible and not discarded.
- Be sure to include your return address on the letter, as non-constituent mail may be thrown out.
- Use your own words and stationery. Legislators feel that personal letters, rather than form letters, show greater personal commitment on the part of the writer, and therefore carry greater weight.
- Keep your message focused and avoid a “laundry list” of issues.
- Be brief, but include enough information to explain your reason for writing.
- Be specific and give example(s) of how the issue affects your district.
- Know your facts; you can hurt your credibility by offering inaccurate or misleading information.
- Acknowledge counter-arguments and evidence.
- If you can, find out how your legislators voted on this issue or similar issues in the past.
- Be timely and contact your legislator while there is still time for him/her to consider and act on your request.
- Be persistent; write back and ask for more information if you do not receive a specific response.
- Say thank you.
- **DO NOT** use a negative, condescending threatening or intimidating tone.