

Tips on Writing to a Member of Congress

Letters and emails are the most popular choices of communication with a congressional office. You may also call or send a fax. Regardless of how you contact elected officials, these tips will help make sure your representative knows where you stand. (When using email, list your Name, Address, City, State and Zip Code at the top of your message, before you begin your letter.)

- State the purpose of your letter in the first paragraph. If it pertains to a specific bill identify it by the bill's name or bill number such as House bill (H.R. ____) or Senate bill (S. ____).
- Be courteous, to the point, and include key information using personal examples to support your position.
- Address only one issue in each letter; and if possible, keep the letter to one page.
- Ask for the congressional member to support your position, to provide his/her position on the issue and if he/she disagrees, to state the reason for disagreement.

Addressing Correspondence:

To a Senator

The Honorable (full name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last Name):

To a Representative

The Honorable (full name)
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (Last Name):

The President

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Tips On Telephoning Your Elected Representatives

To find your senators' and representative's phone numbers, you may use the searchable online congressional directory at the NAUS website <http://capwiz.com/naus/directory/congdir.tt> or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your senators' and/or representative's office.

Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.

After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support/oppose (S. ___/H.R. ___)."

You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your senators' or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

