

Step One: Relax

- Personal connections are more important than pages of detailed proposals—you don't have to be an expert! Even if you aren't personally impacted by an issue on a day-to-day basis, the fact that you are a constituent and care about the issue is important enough.

Step Two: Identify Yourself

- Explain that you are a constituent, and talk about the school, church and/or organization that you are a part of, and how your membership in that community/organization has inspired your passion about this issue and your desire to write about it.

Step Three: Be Yourself

- Your elected officials want to hear from you because they represent you! They can't effectively address issues that concern their constituents if they don't know what they are. Explain your personal connection, or why you feel passionately about this issue.

Step Four: Ask

- Be specific about what action you are asking your legislator to take. This may involve some additional research if there is current legislation going through Congress, or you can provide some suggestions based on your own research into the issue.

Things to Remember

- Be polite! Everyone responds better to positive communication, so make sure to keep this in mind. This includes using proper formal formatting (see Sample Letter).
- Proofread your letter, and even better, go over it with other members of your group. If you are writing individually, ask a friend or family member to review your letter!
- Make sure to do your research ahead of time: a legislator's website may show you where they already stand on an issue.