

TIPS FOR CONTACTING ELECTED OFFICIALS

Writing Letters

- Keep them short and simple (1 page/1 issue per letter).
- Identify the issue and include the bill number (if there is one)
- Get right to the point – I do/do not support this bill or issue.
- Give clear and specific reasons for your positions.
- Tell how the bill would affect you, your family or people that you know.
- Be polite and reasonable – never threaten or insult.
- Thank them for their time and interest.
- Include your name, address and telephone number.
- Make your letter stand out. Use paper that isn't white or has a design.
- Most effective during the first half of session.

E-mail

- Treat like a regular letter, don't use abbreviations or "text speak."
- Most effective during the second half of session, after committee deadlines have passed.

Calling

- Effective when we need to respond quickly.
- Identify the issue or bill you're calling about and what position you want the legislator to take.
- Be polite.
- Don't talk for more than five minutes.
- Thank them for their time and interest.
- If leaving a message state your name, address, the number of the bill (if there is one), the position you want the legislator to take and why.

Meeting w/Legislators

- Be on time.
- Introduce yourself and tell your story (briefly).
- Be positive and friendly.
- Tell them why you are visiting.
- If you are with a group, plan out ahead of time who will say what.
- Give reliable information.
- Ask them how they will vote on the issue.
- Thank them for their time and interest.
- Wait until you are in the car to complain.

Remember: Always focus on issues that are currently before a committee *your* legislator is serving on or coming up for a vote on the House or Senate floor. We all have particular issues we care about but we need to focus on what's happening right now and work as a movement to accomplish our goals.