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## Tips for Writing to Your Elected Officials

An effective way to communicate your concerns with your legislator is by writing a letter. Phone calls are the quickest method of communication, but unless your legislator is available to speak with you, your concerns will be relayed to him or her through a staff member. In this way, neither your message nor your personal touch reaches your legislator directly.

Writing a letter is simple and is, in fact, the most popular method of reaching a member of Congress. When drafting a letter, please bear in mind these few basic suggestions:

**Be Direct:** State the purpose of writing your legislator in the first paragraph of the letter.

**Be Accurate:** If your letter concerns a specific piece of legislation, identify it as such, e.g., House bill: H.R. (number), Senate bill: S. (number). The Library of Congress provides a website that will assist you in researching a House or Senate bill number. Please visit the Library of Congress at <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

**Be Concise:** Keep the letter to one page, if possible.

**Be Efficient:** E-mailing or faxing your letter, as opposed to mailing it, is highly recommended. Mail typically takes four to six weeks to reach your legislator's desk. Legislators' fax numbers, e-mail addresses (if available) and other write your legislator tools can be obtained by using the "Find Your Elected Officials" page on this website.

### Addressing your Letters:

You can direct postal correspondence to your Senator as follows:

The Honorable (Name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator (Name):

You can direct postal correspondence to your Representative as follows:

The Honorable (Name)  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative (Name):