

Activity

# Writing a Letter to a Member of Congress (or Other Elected Official)

## Learning Objectives

Students will write a letter to a member of Congress about a specific issue.

## Length

Varies

## Materials

[Writing a Letter to a Member of Congress \(Google Doc\)](#)



## Instructional Plan

### Writing a Letter to a Member of Congress

Every state in the United States is represented by two senators and is divided into one or more congressional districts represented by a member of Congress who sits in the House of Representatives. Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Washington, DC, have non-voting delegates in the House of Representatives and are not represented by senators.

Writing a letter to a member of Congress is a powerful means for you to actively engage in the democratic process and amplify your voice. This letter will serve as a direct form of communication between you as a constituent (anyone who lives in the district, whether or not they are a citizen or old enough to vote) and your elected representatives. It is intended to serve as a platform to express concerns, share perspectives, and advocate for specific policies or change.

Most communication is read by staff members, who tally up the issues raised and give the member of Congress they work for statistics on the issues. Adding your voice can raise the profile of your issue. Particularly well-written letters could get passed on to the member of Congress to read personally.

Sometimes members of Congress will respond, although often with a form letter.

### Finding Your Representative

- House of Representatives: [Find Your Representative | House.gov](#)
- Senate: [Contacting U.S. Senators | Senate.gov](#)

### Tips:

- *Write to Your Own Representatives*
  - Members of Congress give much more weight to letters from their own constituents than to those

coming from other districts or states.

- *Target Your Audience*
    - Representatives generally serve a specific area of their state.
    - Senators serve the ENTIRE state—consider writing to both your senators AND your rep!
  - *Keep it concise!*
    - Ideally one page.
    - Members of Congress get a lot of mail.
  - *Be respectful!*
    - Format the letter.
    - Use clear and simple language.
    - Provide specific examples and references to show you are well-informed.
    - Remember: members of Congress are there to represent you!
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[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

[Date]

The Honorable [Representative or Senators Name]

U.S. House of Representatives [or U.S. Senate]

[Office Address]

[City, State, ZIP Code]

Subject: [Brief summary of the issue or topic]

Dear [Representative or Senator] [Last Name],

[Make Your Point - Identify yourself, the issue, and why this issue is important to you. If you are writing about a specific bill, mention it. Who or what do you represent? This is a chance to highlight that you are a constituent of the representative.]

[Make the Ask - what do you want your representative to do—vote a certain way, make sure a certain policy is included in a piece of legislation, or raise a certain issue? If applicable, suggest potential solutions or policy recommendations.]

- Keep your letter short: pick your two or three best arguments.
- If you have one, a personal story or description of a local impact can go a long way.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue. I would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss this matter further, and I look forward to hearing about your stance and actions on [the issue] in the near future.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]