

SAMPLE LETTER THAT YOU CAN USE TO WRITE TO YOUR LEGISLATOR

(Month) (Day) (Year)

For United States Senators

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

Dear Senator (last name):

For Members of the U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable (full name)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (last name):

RE: child sex trafficking and exploitation (include any specific bill numbers for your state, authors and subjects if you are writing to support or oppose a particular legislative bill). **Keep letters brief and to one page. Try to discuss only one bill or issue.**

Dear (Assembly Member/Senator) (Last name): My name is (your first and last name) and I (family member /service provider/advocate/community member) reside in your district. **Introduce yourself: "I am a social worker at _____."**

(State why you support or oppose the bill or other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly). Stick to the point with a brief statement of the issue or concern, such as "We urge your support for _____, which will _____." **If you are writing in reference to a specific bill, include the bill number. Follow your opening paragraph with a concise explanation of why you support or oppose a particular bill or issue. Strong, well-thought-out arguments are more effective than a list of reasons to support or oppose a bill. Use bullet points to help outline your arguments.**

(Include a personal story. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family members and your community). **Help the legislator understand why your position is important to his or her constituents. Include facts and statistics about how a bill or issue will impact educators, students or schools in the legislator's district. If possible, include a local anecdote illustrating the problem you are seeking to address, using your own knowledge and experience to inform the legislator.**

(Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response. Be sure to include your name and address on both your letter and envelope). **Include contact information and offer to be a resource should the legislator or staff have questions or need additional information.**

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

Print your name

Street address

City, State, Zip code

TIPS FOR WRITING, SENDING AN E-MAIL OR CALLING A LEGISLATOR

Writing a letter to a legislator

Use the proper salutation, for example:

The Honorable (first name) (last name)
Address
City, State, Zip code

Dear (Assembly Member / Senator) (last name)

Be courteous and informative in your communication.

State the purpose of the letter in the opening sentence and if you are referring to a bill, include the bill number, author and topic. If you live in the elected official's district be sure to say this in the opening paragraph as well.

Focus on the message and key points. Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your family. Keep the letter brief – not more than one page.

Restate your request at the end of the letter, for example urging them to support or oppose the bill. Thank the legislator for his or her support and offer to address any questions that he or she might have. Be sure to include your contact information and sign the letter.

Sending e-mail communication to a legislator

The same guidelines apply to e-mail as to written letters. Before sending an e-mail, you might want to call the legislator's office and ask if a letter sent by e-mail is effective. If you do send an e-mail, send it to the representative. Do not copy other representatives or send a mass e-mail. Make it a brief message with no special layouts or graphics. Do not include attachments. Include your full name and address so it is clear that you are a constituent. Ask for a response. You might also want to send a hard copy of your e-mail to the legislator.

Phone calls to a legislator

State your name and address and identify yourself as the legislator's constituent. You will often be speaking with a secretary or aide. Briefly make known your position as they keep track of the issues that people call about to report to the legislator. Have your thoughts organized in advance, which will help you to keep the call brief and to the point. It is also very helpful to share how the issue affects you personally. Thank them for their support.