**Best practices for writing, calling or emailing 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 polite and clear in your communication. Start by stating the purpose of your letter in the opening sentence, and if you're referencing a bill, include the bill number, its author, and the topic. If you are a constituent in the legislator’s district, mention this in the first paragraph as well.

Focus on the main message and key points. Personalize your letter by sharing specific examples of how the proposed legislation could impact you or your family. Keep your letter concise—ideally no longer than one page.

At the end of the letter, reiterate your request, such as urging the legislator to support or oppose the bill. Thank them for their time and consideration, and offer to answer any questions they may have. Be sure to include your contact information and sign the letter.

**Sending an E-mail to a Legislator**

When sending an e-mail to a legislator, follow the same guidelines as for a written letter. Before sending your message, consider calling the legislator’s office to confirm whether e-mails are effective for communication. If you do decide to send an e-mail, address it directly to the representative—avoid mass e-mails or copying other legislators. Keep the message concise, without special formatting or graphics, and refrain from including attachments. Be sure to include your full name and address to verify that you are a constituent, and politely request a response. For added impact, you may also want to follow up by mailing a hard copy of your e-mail.

**Making a Phone Call to a Legislator**

When calling a legislator’s office, begin by stating your name, address, and your status as a constituent. You'll likely be speaking with a secretary or aide, so briefly explain your position on the issue at hand—office staff often track these calls to report to the legislator. Prepare your main points in advance to ensure the conversation is brief and focused. Sharing how the issue personally affects you can make a stronger impression. Lastly, thank the staff for their time and for the legislator’s support.