

## Letters to Officials

Most people in power keep close track of letters and emails written by the public. It's one of the ways they gauge public opinion. Although a U.S. senator, a CEO, or the head of a nonprofit may not personally read your letter, they have assistants who read letters and tally opinions. Your letter or email will be read, and it might be answered.



**Tell who you are.** Give your name, address, phone, and email address. The people who read your letter want to know who you are, why you care, and how to reach you.

**Focus on one issue.** Don't try to fight crime, air pollution, and unemployment all in one letter.

**Keep it short and simple.** State your ideas in the first paragraph. Get your entire message across in a page or less. People who read a lot of letters don't have much time and will appreciate a short, clear letter.

**Be polite.** You can disagree, but never threaten or insult in a letter. Let your ideas do the talking.

**Include supporting material.** If you have any newspaper articles, letters to the editor, websites, or social media supporting your position, include it.