

CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATOR

TOP TIPS

- **Identify yourself.** Let them know your name and where you live.
- **Be honest and open.** Maintain credibility with legislators by being sincere.
- **Be respectful.** Speak courteously and avoid being confrontational.
- Learn more about the issues at: TobaccoRights.com.

★ Why It's Important

Legislators are elected to serve their constituents' interests, and they need to hear from you. By contacting them, you will hold them accountable for their positions and let them know they won't get your vote if they aren't representing your interests.

CTR IN ACTION: Legislator Contacts



110,167 calls



84,116 emails



2,108 letters



MAKING A PHONE CALL

- **State your purpose for calling.** Identify why you are calling and ask to speak to the legislator or an aide that handles that issue.
- **Leave a message.** Tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message and repeat your position on the issue or legislation in your message.
- **Request a response.** Leave your name and address so that your legislator can respond to you.
- **Be persistent.** Consider sending a follow-up note to the legislator or staff member with whom you spoke, emphasizing your position and your appreciation for his/her attention to the matter.



WRITING A LETTER OR EMAIL

- **Keep your letter short and to the point.** Address only one issue in your letter or e-mail, and try to keep your letter to one page.
- **Get their attention.** State your purpose for writing in the first paragraph. If your letter is about a specific piece of legislation, identify it by the bill number or the common name for the legislation.
- **Make it personal.** Describe how the issue affects you personally and include facts. Doing so will make your letter stronger.
- **Ask where they stand.** A request for a response from your legislator underscores your ongoing interest in the issue.
- **Request a response.** Include your name and complete address, even in your e-mail, so your legislator can respond.

CITIZENS FOR TOBACCO RIGHTS

SAMPLE LETTER

Your Legislator's Name (see chart below)
 Your Legislator's Street Address
 Your Legislator's City, State, Zip

Dear (insert Title, using chart below for guidance):

I am writing to (insert support or oppose) the proposal to (insert issue). This proposed legislation would ... (insert information on why you support or oppose the measure. Remember to be courteous and respectful, not confrontational. Describe how the issue affects you and, whenever possible, include facts and examples to support your position. Personal experience can strengthen your position on the issue and encourage the legislator to listen more closely to your position.)

I urge you to (insert oppose or support) this measure, and to let me know how you plan to vote on it.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
 (insert your signature)

Your First and Last Name

| Person | Address | Title |
|---|--|---|
| President of the United States | President John Doe The White House Washington, DC 20500 | Dear Mr. President: |
| U.S. Senator | The Honorable John Doe United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 | Dear Senator Doe: |
| U.S. Representative | The Honorable John Doe United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 | Dear Representative Doe: |
| Governor | The Honorable John Doe State Capitol City, State and Zip Code | Dear Governor Doe: |
| State Senator | The Honorable John Doe (State) State Senate Capitol City, State and Zip Code | Dear Senator Doe: |
| State Representative State Assemblyman/woman | The Honorable John Doe (State) House of Representatives or (State) Assembly Capitol City, State and Zip Code | Dear Representative Doe or Dear Assemblyman/woman Doe: |
| Mayor | The Honorable John Doe Mayor of (City) City, State and Zip Code | Dear Mayor Doe: |
| City or County Legislator (Various Titles) | The Honorable John Doe Name of City or County Office of Address at Town Hall Or County Office City, State and Zip Code | Dear Freeholder Doe: Dear Commissioner Doe: Dear Alderman/woman Doe: Dear Selectman/woman Doe: Dear Councilman/woman Doe: |

