

COMMUNICATING



with *Congress*

Crafting an Effective Message

One of the most important aspects of crafting an effective message is to get to the point as soon as possible. The very first sentence of your letter should include your purpose for writing to your representative.

Elected officials receive a large amount of messages from constituents every day. These messages come in the form of emails, Tweets, faxes, and physical mail. Staffers try to categorize them as efficiently as possible. Getting straight to the point and sticking to it throughout makes this job easier. It also makes it more likely that you will get a response from your representative's office. Responding to a single-issue message is easier than responding to one that covers a broad range of topics.

Include the bill number in your message if it's a specific piece of legislation that concerns you. At the Congressional level, bills introduced in the House of Representatives start with H.R. Bills introduced in the Senate start with S. **Clearly state your position** on the bill with something such as "Please support H.R. 57." Please visit our site to find out more about the bills that you are interested in writing about.

It is also a good idea to **identify yourself and your affiliation**. This gives the representative a better idea of who you are and why the issue is of special significance to you. There is no downside to letting your Member know that you have a personal stake in how they vote on this issue.

We hope that these suggestions will help you craft more effective messages to your representatives. Sending messages that are concise, specific, and personalized is a great way to make your voice heard and to more ably participate in the democratic process.

To Write a Letter to Your Member of Congress, visit <http://capwiz.com/ahca/home/>

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