



# Tips for Contacting Elected Officials

## 1. Address in official manner, using the title of their office ("Representative Name" or "Senator Name").

- **Example for a letter:**

*January 5, 2008*

*Title [Name of Representative or Senator]*

*House of Representatives [OR] U.S. Senate*

*Office Address*

*City, STATE. Zip*

## 2. Explain the purpose for your letter or call

- **Let them know immediately why you're contacting them.**
- **Tell them why you are concerned or pleased that a particular decision is being considered.**

*– Example: I am concerned about the bill in your committee because the proposed reduction in funding for early childcare will unfairly hurt low-income children and the long term workforce and productivity of our entire region.*

## 3. Summarize your understanding of the issue/decision being considered.

- **State the general impact that you expect to occur if a particular decision is made.**

*– Example: The creation of a new, targeted teacher training program at St. Pete College will help increase the number of high-quality early learning classrooms in our neighborhood.*

## 4. Explain your position on this issue.

- **Describe in detail why you feel the decision made will lead to the impact you foresee.**

*– Example: This will provide opportunities for individuals to both gain employment skills and will increase the quality of teaching in our classrooms where young people experience the highest rate of brain development in their lives!*

- **Describe what any changes will mean to you, and to others.**
- **Describe specifically the positive or negative effects the decision will have on you personally and on those you represent. The more people affected by the decision, the more convincing you may be.**

*– Example: This program will help my employees find better childcare, making them more productive at work and helping build a better foundation for our future workforce.*

## 5. Identify others who may be affected by this decision.

- **Tell the official who (and how many people) will be affected. Statistics can be helpful.**
  - *Example: Years of research have shown that investment in early childhood education produces staggering returns on investment, affecting not just individual lives and families, but entire communities. Across the country, if all three- and four-year olds from low-income families had access to quality early learning opportunities, as a nation we would add up to \$61 billion to the economy in one generation.*

## 6. Acknowledge past support.

- **Mention appropriate actions and decisions the official has made in the past and express thanks for them.**
  - *Example: We appreciate your past support of the bill to fund expanded access to prekindergarten for children from at-risk households.*

## 7. Describe what action you hope the official will take.

- **State specifically what action you (and those you represent) hope the official will take - and by what date, if there is a deadline.**
  - *Example: We hope you agree the best course of action to protect our community's infants and young children is to vote "yes" to House Bill #689b.*

## 8. If you have time and are interested, ask how you can help.

## 9. Close and thank the official, making sure to give them your full name, address, and zip code.

- **If you're writing a letter, sign it with your full name.**
- **Make sure your address, and phone number are included.**
- **Check your letter for spelling and grammatical errors. Correct spelling and grammar won't do the job by themselves, but they can help. Why not give your letter every possible advantage?**

**Thrive  
By Five** 

