

SAMPLE LETTER THAT YOU CAN USE TO WRITE TO YOUR LEGISLATOR

(Month) (Day) (Year)

The Honorable (First name) (Last name)

(Room Number), State Capitol

Tallahassee, FL (Zip Code)

RE: (state the topic or include the bill number, author and subject if you are writing to support or oppose a particular legislative bill)

Dear (Assembly Member/Senator) (Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a regional center consumer (family member /service provider/advocate/community member) who resides in your district.

(State why you support or oppose the bill or other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.)

(Include a personal story. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family member and your community.)

(Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response. Be sure to include your name and address on both your letter and envelope.)

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

Print your name

Street address

City, State, Zip code

TIPS FOR WRITING, SENDING AN E-MAIL OR CALLING 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 courteous and informative in your communication.

State the purpose of the letter in the opening sentence and if you are referring to a bill, include the bill number, author and topic. If you live in the elected official's district be sure to say this in the opening paragraph as well.

Focus on the message and key points. Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your family. Keep the letter brief – not more than one page.

Restate your request at the end of the letter, for example urging them to support or oppose the bill. Thank the legislator for his or her support and offer to address any questions that he or she might have. Be sure to include your contact information, and sign the letter.

Sending e-mail communication to a legislator

The same guidelines apply to e-mail as to written letters. Before sending an e-mail, you might want to call the legislator's office and ask if a letter sent by e-mail is effective. If you do send an e-mail, send it to the representative. Do not copy other representatives or send a mass e-mail. Make it a brief message with no special layouts or graphics. Do not include attachments. Include your full name and address so it is clear that you are a constituent, and ask for a response. You might also want to send a hard copy of your e-mail to the legislator.

Phone calls to a legislator

State your name and address and identify yourself as the legislator's constituent. You will often be speaking with a secretary or aide. Briefly make known your position as they keep track of the issues that people call about to report to the legislator. Have your thoughts organized in

advance, which will help you to keep the call brief and to the point. It is also very helpful to share how the issue affects you personally. Thank them for their support.