

The Ohio Nurses Association

BE POLITE

Legislators react adversely to pressure tactics in the nature of promises or threats. Both are offensive and self-defeating.

USE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS AND WORDS

Make the letter your own. Formal letters, even handwritten ones, are easy to recognize. Including your own personal experience is the best supporting evidence. Tell your legislator how the issue would affect you, your family, your patients, your organization, your profession, or your community.

SUBSTANTIATE YOUR POSITION WITH CONCISE STATEMENTS OF SUPPORTIVE EVIDENCE

Avoid an emotional approach. A legislator may appreciate learning of any specialized knowledge or experience which qualifies you to speak with authority on a subject. Ask your legislator to state his/her position in a reply.

OFFER TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Your legislator cannot possibly know everything about every issue. Indicate your willingness to be of further assistance, especially if you are aware of data or research which may be helpful.

TIME YOUR LETTER APPROPRIATELY

Time is important. The letter should arrive after a bill has been formally introduced. The legislator will appreciate your views most when a bill is up for study and action.

FOLLOW THE ISSUE TO A CONCLUSION

If you do not get a reply, write again. Follow through to learn the results of the vote on the bill. If your legislator pleases you with a vote on an issue, write to tell him/her so. A letter complimenting your legislator will be remembered favorably the next time you write.

Writing Your Legislator

*Suggestions to Help You
Be More Effective*

Writing Your Legislator.

*10 Suggestions to Help You
Become More Effective*

Members of the United States Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Ohio General Assembly should know that registered nurses are part of their constituencies. As a professional person, you are responsible for informing those in public service of the legislative interests of the nursing profession. Writing a letter to your legislator is an effective means of communicating your views. Hearing from home helps a legislator stay informed of local conditions that might be the subject of legislative action. A letter has the added advantage of being a written record for future reference.

The suggestions outlined in this brochure will help you be more effective in your legislative letter writing.



The Ohio Nurses Association...

USE THE CORRECT NAME, ADDRESS, & SALUTATION

Address federal legislators as:

The Honorable _____
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator _____ ;

The Honorable _____
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representative _____ ;

Address state legislators as:

The Honorable _____
Ohio Statehouse
Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator _____ ;

The Honorable _____
The Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative _____ ;

IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND THE ASSOCIATION YOU REPRESENT

If you are a constituent, begin your letter by saying so. Present your opinion in an intelligent, well-considered manner. Sign your name and be sure to include RN. Also include your address. Send a copy of the letter and response to ONA so they will also be informed.

IDENTIFY REFERENCES TO LEGISLATION CORRECTLY BY NUMBER, TITLE, OR BOTH

Make clear what our position is and what exactly you would like your legislator to do. Whenever possible, refer to a specific bill by name and number. Write about only one bill or issue in each letter. Most legislators file by subject or bill.

MAKE YOUR LETTER BRIEF, SPECIFIC, AND STRAIGHT FORWARD

Write legibly or type. Letters should be business like, concise, and clearly worded.



...helping you help nursing.