

# SPEAK UP FOR JUSTICE:

## YOUR LAWMAKERS WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

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### WRITING LETTERS

- Write to your elected officials to state your opinion on an issue, to make a request, or to express appreciation for a recent action.
  - Focus on one subject or issue in the letter. Begin by stating your purpose for writing and follow with reasons for your concern and points to emphasize your argument.
  - If you are using a sample letter, include your own personal message as well.
  - Spell names correctly and use accurate titles (see below). Sign your name and include your address. Ask for a response!
  - The most effective letters are **brief, concise and courteous**.
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### VOICING YOUR OPINION BY PHONE

- Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202.224.3121 to be connected with your senator/representative's office.
  - Telephone calls are often taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue you are calling about.
  - After identifying yourself and where you live, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as "Please tell Senator/Representative X that I support/oppose [*a specific piece of legislation or proposal*]."
  - State reasons for your support or opposition. Ask for your senator/representative's position. You may also request a written response to your call. Offer to provide further information.
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### GUIDELINES FOR EMAIL

- In general, the same guidelines apply to email as to written letters. Email is not as effective as a personally signed letter, but it is a good way to get an urgent message to your representative or senators.
  - Write to your legislator only. Do not copy other members of Congress or send a mass email.
  - Send 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.
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### CONTACT INFORMATION:

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
202.224.3121  
www.house.gov

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202.224.3121  
www.senate.gov

