

1. Check the website (state-
<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ie/lrssearch/default.asp> or federal-
<http://www.house.gov/> or <http://www.senate.gov/>) for the correct spelling of the official's name, and mailing address sounds simple, but it is easy to make a mistake.
2. Use "letterhead" if only to use a stylistic font of your name/address/phone number and email address at the top of the page.
3. Use good quality paper (linen or cotton, Staples sells some great paper, and in small quantities) and a matching envelope.
4. If you have a professional degree (Dr/JD/PhD etc. USE IT). If you own a business, mention it, if you have contributed to the individual's campaign, or worked in a volunteer capacity for the individual, party, mention it (in a nice manner, I was happy to contribute to your campaign). However, don't make it look like I gave you \$25.00 bucks, so I own you.
5. Do not use your employer's letterhead/postage meter or other method of stamping or mailing (it sounds obvious, but people do it).
6. Address the letter correctly, in business style, The Honorable X. Senator X. NOT Mr. Smith or Ms. Smith if the person is an elected official.
7. Use the RE: Line to tell the reader why you are writing, RE: HB 160 STAND YOUR GROUND etc.
8. Unless you are a naturally talented and extremely gifted writer, proof, think and rewrite. Consider collaboration with an individual that shares your beliefs that you trust. I have found "my" (the) best writing I do is a collaboration with another individual. Think about how what you are saying could be interpreted. Write clearly, precisely, and be try to be brief (an impossible task for lawyers, that want to explain the world) but complete.
9. Tell the official specifically why you want them to do or not do something. Vote against HB 160. Vote for HB 160. Give them a real world example (reasonable) of specifically how this bill/action or inaction will affect you and other VOTERS. The key word here is voters.
- 10.If you are certain and absolutely sure you mean it, (many would disagree with me in voicing an "ultimatum") say if you do/do not/ vote for/against Bill X, I will/will not vote for you in the next election.
- 11.Close by saying that you want them to respond in writing to you telling you specifically what action they intend to take/did take on your request and why and when they will be taking this action.
- 12.If you know when the bill is being voted on, let them know you are informed, say, "I understand BILL 123 is being heard before the Judiciary Committee of which John Smith is the chair on June 1, 1944 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 123. I know you are/are not (you can find this information out on the

website, if you find your official, their committee assignments are listed) on X committee, however, when the bill comes to the floor for a vote, I hope you will vote for/against it AS WRITTEN (say if you will/will not accept amendments to the bill) sometimes, it's best to emphasize that you support/oppose a bill as written and you would change your position only if...and be specific as to the only if.

13. Ask specific questions of your officials regarding their position(s).
14. If you belong to an organization that might not object, and that follows the issue, cc them (cc. PTA association, and full address of organization).
15. Or, ABC Fish and Game Club has X members. We voted at the last meeting to have the Pres. Write to you about this issue. (That is powerful stuff, the more members, the better, but do not lie or inflate the number of members).
16. Provide your telephone number and ask them/their staff member that handles this subject matter to call and keep you informed.
17. If they DO call BE POLITE> Do not swear, or raise your voice even if what they say sucks. If they are evasive or do not know the subject matter, ask that a more informed staff member call you and update you on the bill etc.
18. Make sure you know the bill or subject matter if you want to be taken seriously. READ THE BILL. Just because A says it's bad is not enough if you discuss the bill with someone knowledgeable about it (See #9 above).
19. Lastly if you have a few minutes, Google the subject matter and the official's name and see if the official has ever spoken or made statements on the subject matter, if they have, remind them of what they said (on June 1, 2088 Ann-Marie Timmons, a reporter for the Concord Monitor reported you told her "I would never vote for X"). Remind them of this in the letter.
20. Consider asking ALL of the members of an organization to write to the official, provide pre-printed letters *(paper is cheap) or postcards like GOA does, it really works.