



# Writing To Your Lawmakers or Government Officials

## Tips For Writing An Effective Letter

- **Keep it short.** One typewritten page, two at most. Don't write on the back of a page. If writing longhand, make sure it is legible.
- **State your purpose** in the first paragraph. Mention a bill, action or issue by name or by number.
- **Be clear and factual** in stating your concerns. Stick to the subject.
- **Make it personal.** How does the issue affect you? Your children? Your home? Your workplace? Is there a local issue that is related?
- **Ask for a response.** Include your name and street address (even if you send email), because some offices reply only through the post office.

## Forms of Address

### Federal

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States Senate  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States House of Representatives  
House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_

### State

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
Governor of California  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor \_\_\_\_\_

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
California State Senate or Assembly  
Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator or Assemblyman/woman \_\_\_\_\_

## Reference Books

*Note that Reference Books are dated and that the names of government officials may have changed since publication. Internet sites may provide more up to date information (see the Internet Sites section below).*

### Federal

<i>Washington Information Directory</i>	Ref JK 6.W38
<i>United States Government Manual</i>	Ref JK 421.A3
<i>Congressional Directory</i>	Ref JK 1011.U58
<i>Congressional Staff Directory</i>	Ref JK 1012.C65

### California

<i>California Roster</i>	Ref JK8730.C36
<i>California Lobbyists/PAC Directory</i>	Ref JK 8730 2000 C314
<i>California Local Government Directory</i>	Ref JK 8730 2001 C315

### Associations or Organizations of Personal Interest

<i>Encyclopedia of Associations</i>	Ref HS 17.G344 v.1-3
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Start with the **Keyword List** in volume 3 when using this encyclopedia. The number you will see next to each keyword is an entry number rather than a page number. You will find the entries listed in Volume 1 or 2. There is a **User's Guide** in the front of each volume if you need help getting started.

## Internet Sites

**Note** that Internet sites may provide the most up to date information since people in public office change with every election. Go to the Library's **Easy Access Page** [www.westvalley.edu/wvc/pat](http://www.westvalley.edu/wvc/pat) and click on the "**Selected Web Resources**" button. Look at the **Topic** list on the right and click on **Government** to find some useful web sites.

### **Federal**

Write your federal representative	<a href="http://www.visi.com/juan/congress/">www.visi.com/juan/congress/</a>
Official US Executive Branch web sites (Federal Departments and Agencies)	<a href="http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/fedgov.html">www.loc.gov/rr/news/fedgov.html</a>
Thomas Federal Legislative Information	thomas.loc.gov
Guide to Law Online	<a href="http://www.loc.gov/law/guide">www.loc.gov/law/guide</a>

### **State**

California Legislative Information	<a href="http://www.leginfo.ca.gov">www.leginfo.ca.gov</a>
California State Assembly	<a href="http://www.assembly.ca.gov/defaulttext.asp">www.assembly.ca.gov/defaulttext.asp</a>
California State Senate	<a href="http://www.senate.ca.gov">www.senate.ca.gov</a>

### **Associations**

Associations on the net	<a href="http://www.ipl.org/div/aon/">www.ipl.org/div/aon/</a>
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