

How to Communicate Effectively with Your Representative or Senator?

You can call, email, or write a letter to your legislator's office. Email is most effective if it is not a blanket mailing to all members. When sending an email, remember to include your name, postal address and phone number.

Contact information: [Representatives](#) | [Senators](#)

[Find out who represents you](#)

The best way to get a legislator's attention is with a short, well-reasoned letter or email. Here are a few *do's* and *don'ts* on how to write an effective communication to your representative:

Do...

- Be brief.
- Make your letter neat and easy to read (type or print).
- Make sure you understand the [legislative process](#).
- Identify the issue at the top of the communication and cover only one issue. If you have more than one issue that needs to be addressed, write separate communications for each issue.
- Remember; you're the expert; make your communication informative.
- Identify yourself and the reason for your expertise.
- Get right to the point. For example, you may wish to begin your letter like this: "I hope you will support (oppose) HF or SF____."
- Give your reasons for supporting or opposing the measure. Tell your legislator why you think the bill, if it becomes law, will help or hurt you, your children, your business, or your community. Explain what it means to you.
- Use terms they will understand and avoid using abbreviations.
- Offer to be of assistance. Offer to testify if there is a hearing regarding the issue with which you're concerned.
- Ask for a reply if you want one. However, keep in mind how many meetings and hearings your legislator must attend. They will call or write to you as soon as they are able.
- Be polite and reasonable.
- And finally, be sure to say "thank you."

Don't...

- Don't use form letters or post cards. Use your own words. Legislators would rather get one short, simple, handwritten letter or an email than a prepared message that organizations urge people to write.
- Don't threaten legislators.
- Don't address a legislator as "Congressman."

This is the proper way to address your letter:

Honorable (Full Name)
Minnesota House of Representatives
Room # State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

or

Honorable (Full Name)
Minnesota Senate
Room # Capitol Building
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

The salutation should read: Dear Rep. or Sen. (Surname):

Specific addresses for members of the [Minnesota House of Representatives](#) and members of the [Minnesota Senate](#) are available on the House and Senate web pages.

Here are a few more tips:

- Call or write to make an appointment. It's best to let your legislator know when you're going to be at the Capitol so he or she can arrange to spend some time with you.

If you're calling about a specific piece of legislation, find out the House or Senate file number and status before you contact your legislator. For help, call House Index at 651-296-6646.