

Communicating with Congress



With the birth of the internet and e-mail, communicating with Congress has never been so easy or effective. Although letter-writing remains as a traditional method of communication, the most popular choice of communication with a Congressional office is through an e-mail or phone call.

Finding your Congressman's Contact Information

Go to the School Nutrition Association's website (schoolnutrition.org) and **click** on "**Legislative Action**". **Click** on "**Find Elected Officials**" on the toolbar located on the left side, and proceed to click on the first link. Our **Interactive Legislative Directory** can find your elected officials by zip code and state.

Direct link: <http://capwiz.com/asfsa/dbq/officials/>

Sending an E-mail to Congress

For the **subject line** of your e-mail, identify your message by topic or bill number. The **body** of your message should use this format:

Your Name Address City, State ZIP
Dear Representative/Senator _____, (Message)
Sincerely, Your Name

****Note:** *When addressing the Chair of a committee or the Speaker of the House, use:*

*Dear Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman.
Dear Mr. or Madam Speaker,*

The **purpose** of your letter should be stated in the **first paragraph** of your e-mail. If the letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g. H.R. _____, S.B. _____.

Be courteous, clear, and be sure to include key information, using examples to support your position. Address only **one issue** and try to keep the letter to **one page**.

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Telephoning a Member of Congress

Most phone calls in Congressional offices are taken by staff members, not the elected official. **Ask** to speak with the **aide** who handles the issue with which you are concerned.

After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a **brief message**, such as:

"Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support/oppose (S. ___/ H.R. ___)."

You will want to **state reasons** for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your senators' or representative's position on the bill. You may also **request a written response** to your telephone call.

Sending a letter to a Member of Congress

To a **Senator**:

The Honorable (First and Last Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last Name):

To a **Representative**:

The Honorable (First and Last Name)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (Last Name):

When addressing a letter to a Member of Congress, follow the **same** suggestions as for an **e-mail**.

Note:

Many Members of Congress have an **automated mail system** on their websites that allow constituents to contact their representatives directly. These mail systems are usually found under the "**Contact Us**" tab of each elected official's website.

To find your Congressman's website, go to **www.senate.gov** or **www.house.gov**. You may also search your Congressman's name in a search engine.