

An excellent source of information for contacting your legislators begins at legis.iowa.gov. Use the links in the blue box on the left side to view all of all Senators and all Representatives, along with their e-mail addresses, phone #, committee and subcommittee assignments, bills and amendments sponsored, photo, and in many cases, "additional information" in the form of a bio. Clicking on their district # will give you a map the area they represent.

Where do I find my Legislator's contact information?

Find Iowa House and Senate members' phone numbers, e-mail addresses and mailing addresses at www.legis.iowa.gov/Legislators/find.aspx. Choose one of the available searches on the right. The site will return names and contact information.

What if the most effective way to contact my legislator?

In-person: A face-to-face meeting with your Legislator is the most effective way to be heard...

1. Call your Legislator to arrange a time to meet.
2. Be clear about what you wish to discuss.
3. Be on time to the meeting and arrive prepared with materials that support your position.
4. Be prepared to concisely summarize your main points.
5. Send a thank-you note letter after the meeting, summarizing your concern.

Another excellent opportunity for personal contact is at informal meetings conducted by officials to hear from their constituents. Many of Iowa's state and federal representatives conduct such meetings in their locale every year.

Letter or e-mail: The second most effective way is an individual communication, letter or e-mail...

1. Make it personal and be sure to add your name and contact information.
2. State your purpose in the first paragraph.
3. Identify the piece of legislation or issue that your comments pertain to.
4. Be courteous and concise.
5. Personalize your message to show why the issue matters to you. It is especially effective to use your own business and personal examples to support your assertions.
6. Ask for a reply to your requests or questions.
7. Send a thank-you letter to those who act as you request.

By Phone: Ask to speak directly to your Legislator. If you're commenting on a specific piece of legislation or issue up for a vote, state the reasons you support or oppose the bill.

Strategy: Remember the best time to address an issue is with the Legislator(s) who will introduce a bill – you only have to convince one or a few people. The next best timely approach is to work with the subcommittee to whom a bill is assigned – again, only a few people to convince. If still not successful, it is then time to work with the entire committee to whom the bill is assigned. The last and chance is with the two legislative chambers as a whole, where you must convince a majority of your concerns – 26 in the Senate, 51 in the House. Depending on the issue, it can in addition be extremely effective to work directly with the majority leadership in each house.

For additional information on how to contact your legislator or on specific legislation please contact Bill Dikis, FAIA, AIA Iowa Government Affairs Chairperson at billdikis@msn.com or Jessica Reinert at the AIA Iowa office jreinert@aiaiowa.org or 515.244.7502.