

Writing to Your Legislator

***Meeting with or calling your legislators can often make a stronger impression, however, a letter is a strong alternative and an important follow-up for any interaction with your legislator.**

John Smith

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Phone Number

Date

The Honorable [Name of Senator or Representative]

Office address with room number

Dear Senator/Representative [Name of Senator or Representative]:

In the first paragraph **introduce yourself as a constituent and a patron/participant of the arts** in your community.

The second paragraph should begin with the clear and direct intent for your letter (i.e. I am writing to support the importance for the continuation of state arts funding.) This paragraph is about the facts. Explain the uncertainty with the retention of the National Endowment for the Arts and the amount of money being given to arts organizations by both the NEA and the state. Choose to **focus on either the educational, economical, or cultural benefits of arts funding**. It may be tempting to cover them all but try to focus this letter on the benefit you think will most strike a chord with the legislator you are addressing. You may want to discuss the number of jobs the funding supports or the tourism that arts can stimulate. You may want to talk about the educational benefits of a supplemental arts education for young children. Or you may want to discuss how the arts highlight diverse cultures and create a stronger identity among the citizens of this region. Whichever approach you choose, **state the facts, with statistics and reliable cited sources, and include a personal anecdote** to make those facts come to life.

The third paragraph is the specific request. A general letter in support of the arts is all well and good, but what does it really do? **Know which committees your legislator is a part of and which bills are coming up for discussion**. If there are no specific bills at the moment, at least ask that when one does come up, that they keep this information in mind. In a short summary of paragraph two, explain the importance of their support in your request.

In paragraph four, **thank the legislator for their support/consideration in your request**.

Sincerely,

John Smith

[Your title, if it pertains to the arts]

