



Communicating with Your State Legislators

Your Message

- Approach one issue at a time.
- Develop a basic message for your issue that is clear and concise.
- Personalize with your own experience.
- State clearly the result you seek.
- Understand the arguments for and against your issue.

Effective Delivery of Your Message

*If you want to **call** your senator or representative...*

- Identify yourself as a constituent and give your name and address.
- Define the issue with a specific bill number and name.
- Acknowledge the legislator (or staff person) by asking about their position and requesting their vote in your favor.
- Show respect by listening to them and thanking them.

*If you want to **write** to your senator or representative ...*

- Identify yourself as a constituent and give your name and address.
- Define the issue with a specific bill number and name.
- Request a specific action from your legislator.

Sending Your Message

You can communicate:

- by telephone
- by mail
- by e-mail
- in a face-to-face meeting
- by testifying at a public hearing

- In e-mail correspondence, use the following example format for your subject line:

“A Constituent Urges You to Vote ‘Yes’ on House Bill XXXX.”

*If you want to **meet** with your senator or representative ...*

- Arrange a meeting in advance, providing the names of attendees and the topic.
- Be courteous: arrive on time, dress professionally, and come informed on the issue.
- Organize your presentation by introducing yourself, summarizing the issue, and stating your basic message for one issue only.
- Provide a fact sheet on the issue and your contact information.
- Request a specific action from your legislator—ask for their position!

- Answer questions as well as you can and offer to get back to them when you don't have an answer.

If you want to **testify** in front of a committee ...

- Sign your name to the sign-in sheet at the door.
- You may testify along with one or two other people if you wish.
- Bring 25 copies of your testimony and hand them to the secretary before you begin.
- Remember one courtesy—address the committee through the committee chair. Begin your remarks with “Madame Chair, Members of the Committee ...” and respond to questions with “Chairman Jones, Representative Smith...”
- If your representative or senator serves on the committee, a courtesy call to his or her staff in advance is appreciated.

Contacting Your Legislators

Who Represents You?

Type in your address at www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/findset.htm to find out who represents you in Salem and in Congress, or call your county elections office. The telephone number is listed in the blue pages of the phone book.

By Mail

While in session, write to Senator or Representative _____, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310.

When out of session, use the interim address found on their websites or from your county elections office.

By Phone

Using the Legislative Information and Citizen Access Line, you may leave a voicemail message for one or more legislators or speak to an operator about other requests (like your legislator's direct number, information concerning a bill's status, etc.):

- (800) 332-2313 In-state calls during legislative session only

- (503) 986-1187 Calls from Salem or from out-of-state

- (503) 986-1467 TDD access both in and out of the state

Internet Access

For e-mail addresses of legislators and a wealth of information on bills, laws and legislative proceedings, visit the Oregon Legislature website:

www.leg.state.or.us

OEC's Legislative Agenda

To learn more about OEC's legislative agenda, visit www.oeconline.org/our-work/smart-policy

To receive e-mail action alerts, visit www.oeconline.org/get-involved/newsletter-signup

Additional Information

The **Oregon League of Conservation Voters** tracks the environmental voting records of state and federal elected officials. www.olcv.org or (503) 224-4011.

The **Oregon Conservation Network** tracks the full range of environmental legislation through SalemWatch and manages the Email Action Network, which allows citizens to fax their legislators with ease on critical issues. www.olcv.org/ocn or (503) 227-8073.



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