

# Advocacy 105: Editorials and Letters to the Editor

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*Letters to the editor and editorials are an important way to gain support for your issue. Letters to the editor are one of the most widely read parts of the newspaper. Editorial writers and legislators often use them to gauge support of particular issues. They can create the impression of widespread support of opposition to an issue.*

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## Helpful Hints:

- News paper guidelines: These can typically be found on the papers website. The guidelines will tell you how to submit your editorial and how long it can be. In most cases the length of the editorial will be limited to no more than 250 words. So be succinct!
- A letter is more likely to be published if it is responding to something that was written in the publication. Try to include a reference to that article, editorial or letter in your response.
- Timeliness is crucial. It is important to respond as quickly as possible to articles or editorials that appear in the publication. This is easier these days in that most publications receive letters via email.
- Limit the letter to one topic!
- Try to make the leading sentence compelling.
- Including information that is not readily available increases the likelihood that your letter will be published.
- Remember that you are writing for a cause; keep the language reasonable and respectful of others. Your goal is to win allies to the cause. People are not attracted to hostility.
- Try to have someone you trust proof read your article. Ask them to be certain that the point you wish to make is clear and succinct.
- Include your name, telephone number and address. Publications will generally only publish if they can contact the author.
- Get others who share your concern for the issue to write as well. The more letters that are received on a subject the more the likelihood that at least one will be printed.



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