

Calling Your Elected Official

Collegial and concise phone calls are one of the most effective ways to get the attention of your elected representatives—and making your voice heard is needed now more than ever.

Here are the best practices for having an effective phone call:

- **Prepare your message to ensure it's clear and concise.** You have three to five sentences to get your point across, so you need to prioritize what's most important. Do a little homework to familiarize yourself with the key facts about the issue or bill you will be discussing.
- **Always begin and end with a thank you.** Your legislators' offices get lots of calls—stand out by being one of the most appreciative.
- **Make sure you're talking to the right person.** Inform the person who answers your call what issue or bill you are calling about and ask to speak with the appropriate person. If they are unavailable, ask to leave a brief message and your contact information.
- **Let them know you're a constituent.** And don't be shy to share any affiliations with local institutions.
- **Have a concrete request (or "ask").** For example, "Vote no on bill X."
- **Say why it matters.** Briefly explain why you care and what the implications are for your community—and, by extension, the legislator's constituents.
- **Offer yourself as a resource.** If applicable, be sure to mention that you have a relevant area of expertise and/or access to useful technical information. This is your chance to distinguish yourself not only as a concerned constituent but also as someone who wants to be an asset to the legislator and their staff.
- **Let them know you will follow up—and then make sure you do it.** In a friendly tone, state that you will be watching how the legislator acts on the issue. Then, follow up with a personalized email thanking them for their time on the phone with you. Remind them in two to three sentences why this issue matters to you and their district.

Learn More

For more details, and why this form of communication is critical, go to www.ucsusa.org/callyoursenators.



Making your voice heard is needed now more than ever. Phone calls are one of the most effective ways to get the attention of your elected representatives, and as an expert you can distinguish yourself as an asset to the legislator and their staff.

US Air Force