



Making Policy Work for You: **Tips for Writing/E-mailing Your Legislators**

Federal policy can affect the work you do, whether it's through school lunch regulations, access to locally grown foods, or farm conservation that affects our clean air and water. Since policy can influence you, it's important to stay informed and let your legislators know how you feel about policies that affect you.

- After the anthrax scare post-9-11, security has tightened for mail coming into Congressional offices in D.C. Mail takes longer to get there and also goes through a sanitation process that can damage letters. Faxes and e-mail messages are more likely to reach your legislators promptly and in a readable state. You can however, still send letters successfully to offices in your home district or state.
- If you fax or e-mail, address the letter to the staff person that covers the issue that is the focus of your letter. Include the issue and if appropriate the name and number of the bill in the subject line. Be sure to provide your mailing address so they will know you are a constituent. For letters addressed to your Congressperson, follow the format below:
 - The Honorable (full name of your Senator)
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Dear Senator (Last name of your Senator)
 - The Honorable (full name of your Representative)
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. (Last name of your Representative)
- It is important to stay focused and brief. Focusing on the issue or “ask” is most effective. In the body of the letter, include a sentence about how the issue is affecting you and your community, where you are from, and your “ask” from the Congressperson.
 - Example: “Every day I see for sale signs on farms near my home-town of Bargersville, Indiana. At the same time, I struggle to get my kids to eat healthy, and I see more kids in my community that are obese than ever before. To help address these issues, I urge you to support \$50 million in mandatory funding for farm to school grants in Section 122 of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act. This funding would help schools and farmers overcome current barriers of getting fresh local produce into school cafeterias, and it would economically benefit farmers and the local economy.