

CAN-DO's Helpful Reminders on Calling and Writing Your Lawmaker

When calling your Lawmaker directly:

1. Identify yourself as a resident of the lawmaker's district.
2. Be sure to leave the CAN-DO Alert message you received verbatim.
3. Be brief. Keep the body of your message to no more than two sentences.
4. Be courteous and positive. Don't make personal criticisms.
5. If you are unable to speak personally with the lawmaker, leave your name, address and daytime phone number and ask for a response.
6. Thank the person for taking the call.

When writing to a lawmaker:

1. Identify yourself as a resident of the lawmaker's district.
2. Early in the letter, identify the bill number or issue you are writing about.
3. Use your own words (note that this is different from the calling instructions).
4. Be brief, courteous and positive. Don't make personal criticisms.
5. Write only to lawmakers from your own district. An exception is writing to a committee chairperson.
6. Write a thank-you letter after an important vote, and remember to write your lawmaker at the end of the session thanking him or her for their efforts.
7. Whenever you write to a State legislator, be sure to either SEND A COPY TO CAN-DO or call and let us know. We'll forward the information to our legislative liaison in Olympia so he can follow up your letter with the lawmaker.
8. Always address your envelope and letter respectfully. Example:

Hon. _____
Washington State Senate
431 Legislative Building
Olympia, WA 98504

CAN-DO's Helpful Reminders on Email Etiquette

To make the most of e-mail contact with legislators:

- Never forward e-mail – start a new one.
- Keep the message short.
- Use your home address whenever possible. Some businesses have a policy disallowing the use of business email for legislative advocacy.
- Don't expect a response – If you want, send a message with a tag for notification when the message is read.