



How to Communicate With Elected Officials

Remember: Who, Where, What & Why

No one is an expert on everything, including our elected officials. Yet elected officials make laws and public policies that impact every part of our lives. This is why it is essential to communicate with our elected officials effectively.

Keep It Short

Elected officials tend to be very busy, so make sure to keep your communications short and to-the-point. This will make your message stronger and decrease the chance of your message being ignored.

When communicating with elected officials, whether sending a message or having a conversation, make sure to think ahead of time about the key points you want to make. When crafting your message, always remember the key questions you should answer every time: **Who, Where, What & Why!**

Who: Who are you?

Make sure to tell elected officials who you are and what viewpoint you bring to the conversation.

"My name is Jane Doe and I am writing to you today as a child care provider."

Where: Where are you from?

This is important because elected officials want to know if you are a voter in their district.

"I live and operate my child care business in your legislative district in Tacoma, WA."

What: What are you asking for?

Always make sure to have a request prepared for elected officials when communicating with them, and ask if they will follow through on your request. Remember, THEY WORK FOR YOU.

"I am writing to ask you to invest more state dollars in child care. Can I count on you to do that?"

Why: Why is your request important?

Share your reasons why you are making the request. One of the most effective ways to do this is to share your personal child care story. Personal stories help officials better understand and remember important issues.

Another option is sharing a few key data points, such as that about 60% of children under age six live in homes where all adults are working, and that about 63% of Washingtonians live in areas where child care supply does not meet demand.

"Currently, child care providers rank in the 3rd percentile of all Washington occupational wages. I know from running my child care business that low wages make it very difficult for me to recruit and retain staff and provide quality care for children."

