



Tips for Writing Letters of Support

Emails, letters and faxes are an extremely effective way of communicating with your elected officials. Many legislators believe that a letter represents not only the position of the writer but also many other constituents who may have not had the time to write.

These tips will help increase the effectiveness of your letter:

- **Keep it brief:** Letters should never be longer than one page, and should be limited to one issue. Legislative aides read many letters on many issues in a day, so your letter should be as concise as possible.
- **State who you are and what you want up front:** In the first paragraph, tell your legislators that you are a constituent and identify the issue about which you are writing. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, it helps to identify it by its bill number (e.g. House Bill / H.R. _____ or Senate Bill / S. _____).
- **Hit your three most important points:** Choose the three strongest points that will be most effective in persuading legislators to support your position and flesh them out.
- **Personalize your letter:** Tell your elected official why this legislation matters to you your community or state. If you have one, include a **personal story** that shows how this issue affects you and your family. A constituent's personal stories can be very persuasive as your legislator shapes his or her position.
- **Personalize your relationship:** Have you ever voted for this elected official? Have you ever contributed time or money to his or her campaign? Are you familiar with her through any business or personal relationship? If so, tell your elected official or his staff person. The closer your legislator feels to you, the more powerful your argument is likely to be.



Your legislator's job is to represent you. You should be courteous and to the point, but don't be afraid to take a firm position. Remember that often your elected official may know no more about a given issue than

you do. Reference: <https://www.aclu.org/other/tips-writing-your-elected-officials> See **IMPORTANT NOTE BELOW**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Branch members are encouraged to communicate to elected officials, but they can't say they represent or are writing on behalf of the branch."

Sample Letter of Support

January 30, 2022

To: Senator
From: Peggy Shippen, AAUW Salem Branch Public Policy Chair
1955 Salem Dallas Hwy NW #610
Salem, OR 97304
RE: SB 1556 – Certification of Homecare Workers & Personal Attendants

Dear Senator Patterson,

As member of AAUW of Oregon and an enthusiastic constituent, I would like to encourage your support of SB 1556.

While I and my parents before me had the means to move into a continuing care facility where the management screened home care workers and personal attendants, I have other Salem family members who, while still working and making a good living, are not as privileged. I have another friend whose parent wants to stay at home with a welcoming family. Passage of SB 1556 will help them immensely to:

- Lessen the stress and time it takes (especially time they have to take from work) to find homecare workers;
- Increase the chances that these workers will be competent and will not be moving from home to home for higher wages.

Further, passage of HB 1556 can help young people, like my granddaughter, create a pathway for professional and educational development. Last summer, having announced that she thought she'd just skip college and go to work, she began working at a child care center. This experience increased her confidence and awareness that she liked working with young children. She is now thinking of going to college and becoming an elementary school teacher.

Other young people may find a pathway into the growing medical profession. Certification for these young people can give them a means for helping support themselves, giving them a way to provide a reference for competence and trustworthiness. A credible certificate can instill pride and confidence for healthcare workers of any age to advance or remain in a profession that will continue to be in high demand for families and large care businesses.

Thank you for your support of SB 1556!