

Instructions for Writing Your Legislators on behalf of IAWP

The California Chapter will provide template letters for its members to use when the organization has identified an issue and a stance. If you choose to support the stance the organization has taken the letter may be used in the format provided. If any changes are made it **must** be approved by the State Legislative Chair prior to sending to membership. As a member of the IAWP you are perceived by the reader of a letter as if you are expressing an organizational view point. Because of this it is critical that all information that is sent with IAWP in any part of the letter **MUST** be approved by the State Legislative Chair.

EMAIL

All of the legislators receive email; if you choose to email you can cut and paste the letter into an email. Always check to make sure the letter is complete before you send and that the cut and paste hasn't changed the format. Don't forget to make a copy of the letter before you send it.

Know Your Audience

Are you writing regarding a State or a Federal issue/topic? Make sure you address it to the appropriate congressional leader and the best thing is to write to the legislators that are representing your district. Use the links below to help identify the correct representative.

To Locate Your Congressional Leaders

Federal House of Representatives

<http://www.house.gov/>

Federal Senators

<http://senate.gov/>

California State Legislators

http://www.legislature.ca.gov/legislators_and_districts/legislators/your_legislator.html

Addressing Members of Congress

<p>To Your Senator:</p> <p>The Honorable (full name) (Room #) (Name) Senate Office Building United States Senate Washington, DC 20510</p> <p>Dear Senator:</p>	<p>To Your Representative:</p> <p>The Honorable (full name) (Room #) (Name) House Office Building United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515</p> <p>Dear Representative:</p>
<p>The above addresses should be used in email messages, as well as those sent through the Postal Service.</p>	

Addressing a member of Congress **Best practice, and always include the intent at the very beginning of the letter or make it..... RE: TAXES (Author name) SB 1120 (Example)**

Think Locally

It's usually best to send letters to the representative from your local Congressional District or

the senators from your state. Your vote helps elect them -- or not -- and that fact alone carries a lot of weight. It also helps personalize your letter. Sending the same "cookie-cutter" message to every member of Congress may grab attention but rarely much consideration.

Keep it Simple

Your letter should address a single topic or issue. Typed, one-page letters are best. Many PACs ([Political Action Committees](#)) recommend a three-paragraph letter structured like this:

1. Say why you are writing and who you are. List your "credentials." (If you want a response, you must include your name and address, even when using email.)
2. Provide more detail. Be factual not emotional. Provide specific rather than general information about how the topic affects you and others. If a certain bill is involved, [cite the correct title or number](#) whenever possible.
3. Close by requesting the action you want taken: a vote for or against a bill, or change in general policy.

The best letters are courteous, to the point, and include specific supporting examples.