

# Letter Structure (Anatomy of a Letter)

Letter should be less than one page and as succinct as possible.

Date

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***Always use  
"The  
Honorable"  
for any  
elected  
official***

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The Honorable...  
Name of Legislative Body  
Legislative Bldg. and Room Number  
City, State Zip

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***Make sure  
name is  
spelled  
correctly***

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Dear Senator (or Representative):

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***Identify the  
bill number  
or issue***

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I am writing to ask for your support for...

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***Explain bill***

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This bill would require...

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***List reasons:  
Cite data,  
facts and  
anecdotes  
from your  
own  
institution***

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I support it because...

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***Request  
action and  
response***

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I would like you to support...and look forward to a letter from you explaining  
your position

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Very Truly Yours,

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Name  
Address  
City, State Zip

# Sample Letter

Date

The Honorable  
Name of Legislative Body  
Legislative Building and Room Number  
City, State Zip

Dear Senator (or Representative):

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***Your Issue:*** We are writing in support of Senate Bill 6514, which would allow longer time limits and the use of paraprofessionals in state-funded family preservation programs. As you know, successful family programs keep families together and avoid the cost of foster care and other out-of-home child placements.

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***Your Affiliation:*** As supporters of SB6514, we focus on ways in which legislative action can help preserve families. We provide services such as child care, counseling, drug or alcohol treatment, help with parenting, budgeting, and coping with stress, health and safety issues. The goal is to create a safe and stable family environment so that children can stay in the home whenever it is appropriate.

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***Your Key Concerns:*** We believe the family preservation programs provided by us would benefit from two key changes embodied in Senate Bill 6514. This bill would allow state-funded services to continue for 90 days - rather than the current 40. Also, the bill would make it possible for paraprofessionals, under the direction of a social worker, to help families get the resources and support they need to stay together.

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***Personal Experience:*** Counselors at our organization tell us that many families cannot find stabilization in a 30-day period. We know from experience that many families need more time to incorporate the services provided into their lives. Among us are paraprofessionals who would love to help provide contacts within the community for these families. This bill would allow us to do so.

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***Ask for Action:*** Thank you for your support of SB6514. Please call us if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

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***Your Address:*** Joan Citizen  
Address  
City, State Zip