

When Contacting your NJ State Legislators

Which is best ... Sending a Letter by Email or Handwritten?

It depends on the urgency of your issue.

Handwritten letters are always a nice gesture. However, if you are writing with concerns about an upcoming vote, then email is a better option. Due to security screenings of mail delivered by the postal service, a handwritten letter may be delayed by several weeks before being received by the addressee. Thus, the actual receipt of your correspondence could be long after a vote or important decision has been made by your district representative. Other possible options for contacting your legislators are making phone calls or sending your letters by fax.

Writing Your Letter

Here are some helpful tips:

1. Identify the issue ... include the Bill number and name.
2. Keep it short (one to two paragraphs).
3. Personalize it with anecdotal information.
4. Support your opinion with facts.
5. Sign the letter.
6. Include your contact info ... this verifies that you are a constituent.
7. Verify the correct spelling of the Legislator's name and their title.

How Emails are Received and Handled

1. A Legislative Aid downloads email messages.
2. The email sender is verified as a constituent.
3. Emails are printed and tallied.
4. An email summary is given at briefing sessions before a vote.

Phone Calls

Here are some helpful tips for your call:

1. Verify that you have called the correct phone number for your Legislator.
2. Speak slowly and clearly so that all information is written down correctly.
3. State your name and contact info ... this verifies that you are a constituent.
4. Identify the issue ... include the Bill number and name.
5. Support your opinion with facts but keep it short.
6. Thank the Aid for their assistance and request a response from your Legislator.