



# Tips on Writing your Legislator

## **REMEMBER: THE SQUEAKY WHEEL GETS THE GREASE, IF YOU DON'T SQUEAK ...**

The following are some helpful guidelines for a successful letter:

**Identify Yourself** – A letter will be given the most serious consideration if it is handwritten or typed on business/personal letterhead. Include your name and address and, if applicable, that you are a constituent. State that you are a physician and how the issue in question impacts your practice.

**Be Specific** – If you want him or her to support or oppose a particular bill, tell them. State your position in the very first sentence using the specific bill number or legislative issue.

**Be Informed** – Only use verifiable facts. If you are knowledgeable about an issue and the legislative process, your opinion will carry more weight.

**Be Brief** – Whenever possible, condense your arguments to one page or less. A longer letter is less likely to be completely read.

**Avoid “Jargon”** – Use plain language and avoid complex medical terms.

**Personalize the Letter** – Don't send form letters or postcards. Your position will be better received if it is in your own words.

**Don't Demand** – Threats don't work. **ASK** for a legislator's vote. Avoid being argumentative, condescending or making accusations.

**Request A Reply** – Let the legislator know that you are interested in his/her position on the issue; ask for a response to your letter. Include your address, phone and/or fax number in case they need further information.

**Follow Through** – Send a **thank you letter** when a legislator responds or votes the way you requested. Legislators seldom receive correspondence commending/thanking them for their vote. Such letters **WILL** be remembered and appreciated.

**Other Suggestions** – Don't be argumentative; don't be condescending; don't make accusations; and offer your assistance on any future health care issues.

**NOTE:** Please follow these guidelines for addressing envelopes and correspondence.

**Address:**

Honorable John Doe  
[Room #] Legislative Office Bldg.  
Atlanta, GA 30334

**Salutation:**

Dear Governor Perdue:  
Dear Rep. Jones:  
Dear Sen. Smith:  
Dear Congressman / Congresswoman Doe: