

Contacting Your Elected Official

Tips On Telephoning Your Elected Representatives

To find your senators' and representative's phone numbers, you may use our searchable online congressional directory or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202)224-3121 and ask for your senators' and/or representative's office.

Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment. After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support/oppose (S.___/H.R.___)."

You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your senators' or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

Tips On Writing Congress

The letter is the most popular choice of communication with a congressional office. If you decide to write a letter, this list of helpful suggestions will improve the effectiveness of the letter:

1. Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House bill: H. R. _____, Senate bill: S. _____.
2. Be courteous, to the point, and include key information, using examples to support your position.
3. Address only one issue in each letter; and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.

Addressing Correspondence:

To a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__(name of)Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

To a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
__(Rm.#)__(name of)House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

Note: When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as:

Dear Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman:

Dear Madam Speaker or Mr. Speaker:

Tips on Scheduling a Meeting with your Member

Most offices require you to submit a meeting request letter either by email or by fax. After you fax the letter make sure you follow up with the office. A sample letter may look like (please put on your company letterhead):

Date

The Hon. Name
United States House/Senate
Address
Washington, D.C. 20510
Fax Insert Number
Attn: Appointment Scheduler

Dear Senator/Congressman(woman):

My name is _____ and I am the title for Company, a Type of Company based in City. I am a member of the National Tour Association, the leading non-profit packaged travel association in the United States. NTA has more than 2700 members from all 50 states, Canada and more than 25 countries worldwide.

I will be in Washington, D.C./your district on _____ and I would appreciate a meeting with you and/or your staff to discuss topics of tremendous importance to the packaged travel industry. These topics include (List topics)

I hope you can meet with me during (Your open dates/times) to discuss these important issues.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Helpful Hints for a Great Meeting

- Remember it's about the people and the culture in your company – What your company does, what makes your company unique, and how your company contributes to the economy– all of that is important for the Representative or Senator to see.
- Who the person is (a little background; we can help you with this!)
- That you are there to speak directly about the importance of the travel and tourism
- Take pictures – we'll include them in a Tuesday Article and share them with the Members to remind them of their visit with you and the stories they heard.