

Writing a Letter to the Editor

Letters to the editor (LTEs) are an effective means of communicating your viewpoint on issues you care about—providing more in-depth information or even correcting misinformation previously published in the media. As the authentic opinions of community members, LTE messages are also useful in illustrating to legislators issues that remain important to their constituents.

Write the Letter

- Review the issue you care to write about, outlining the most important points you would like to make in your letter.
- Research media outlets in your area for your letter's submission. Publications like local newspapers and magazines frequently accept letters to the editor about issues affecting the community and their subscribers.
- Check the editorial section of these publications or call the editorial desk to inquire about word limits.
- Begin the letter with a sentence explaining why you're choosing to write about this issue.
- Detail any personal information that ties you to the issue, or why you feel it's important.
- Do not stray from the message; keep sentences short and specific.
- Be polite and don't argue with previous writers.
- Keep in mind that the more focused, applicable and timely your letter is, the more likely it is to get published.

Get Published

- Review published letters, editing yours for similar format and length.
 - As an example, [a letter from Erik Milito](#), API's director of upstream and industry operations, was published in The New York Times discussing the industry's commitment to safety.
- Ensure that your letter fits with the newspapers' criteria.
- Include your name, address, phone number and email with your submission.
- Submit the letter to the local publication you selected. Follow up within one to two days if you haven't received a response.
- Please share a copy with the Energy Nation team at info@energynation.org so we can potentially feature your LTE on our website.

Be patient when working with the media. Remember that publications receive hundreds of letters a month and the most focused messages are the ones chosen to be published.