

Strategies

E-mailing Elected Officials

In general, the same guidelines apply as with writing letters to elected officials.

Here are some tips in locating the e-mail address for your elected official.

Federal Government Information:

Go to www.contactingthecongress.org. **Contacting the Congress** is a very up-to-date database of congressional contact information for **the current Congress**.

State Government Information:

State websites provide the most information at your fingertips. There is no consistent URL stream for the State Legislature websites, except that they are typically a .gov site. Go to your online search engine and key-in the “state” name you want to research and the word “legislature” (e.g. Arizona legislature and we find www.azleg.gov). Typically the first few websites found will be the one you’re looking for. State Legislature sites typically enable you to search your state and local officials by zip code.

Local Government Information:

Similarly, county websites provide the most information for local governments. County government websites URL streams typically have the county name followed by the state name abbreviated followed by .gov. Go to your online search engine and key-in the “county” name you want to research and the word “government” (e.g. Placer County government, and we find www.placer.ca.gov). County government sites typically provide you a complete list of Board of Supervisors and County Committees and Commissions.

The following tips provide specific instructions to use when e-mailing your elected officials.

Introductions:

- Some offices receive hundreds of e-mails a week. The most important e-mails are those from constituents.
- Always include your street address, city, state and zip code in the top of your e-mail so the office knows your message is from a constituent and needs attention.

- Include your name, organization and the fact that you are a constituent in the first line of your e-mail.
- Write directly to the elected official representing you. E-mails received from citizens outside that district or state would be referred elsewhere.

Content:

- Address only one issue in each e-mail.
- The closing sentence of your message should always reiterate exactly what you are asking the elected official to do.

Request a Response:

- Many offices will respond to e-mails by sending an auto-response (generic) acknowledging that the office received your e-mail. These offices usually follow up with a written letter response.
- If you receive a response letter it means your letter was read and counted. That's the most important thing.