

HOW TO WRITE TO MPS ON PRO-LIFE ISSUES

As a grassroots campaigning organisation, SPUC's great strength is in our network of supporters up and down the country. Our power lies in the mass of our supporters lobbying their MPs at once. In this briefing, we explain how to write letters to your MP, and tips to make them as effective as possible.

WHO IS MY MP?

Firstly, identify who your MP is. For this briefing, we are concentrating on MPs who legislate in Westminster. For supporters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, it may often be more appropriate to contact your representatives in the devolved administrations, but you still have an MP. You can find out who your MP is on the parliamentary website or via the SPUC website's MP tool.

Please only contact your own constituency MP. There is a strict parliamentary protocol where MPs will only take note of and reply to personal communications from their own constituents, so please do not waste your efforts contacting MPs other than your own. Include your address in a letter to show that you are a constituent.

SHOULD I WRITE OR EMAIL?

E-mails are a good quick way to contact your MP, particularly if you are pushed for time. However, it is not the best way, as e-mails do not have the same impact as a physical paper letter.

Writing a physical paper letter to your MP is one of the most effective ways to be a pro-life influence on your MP. Most people who write to MPs do so about their own personal concerns, so when MPs start receiving personal letters from different constituents, all about the same issue, they take an interest. It takes very few letters before an MP pays attention to a public issue. We have been told by MPs that as few as six letters on the same subject will be enough to get their attention.

WHERE DO I SEND MY LETTER?

If you are sending a paper letter, you should send it to your MP at the House of Commons in Westminster. The address for this is simply, 'House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.' You do not need to send letters to your MP's local constituency office.

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WHAT IF I KNOW MY MP IS PRO-ABORTION?

(A lot of dots!)

It is still worth writing to your MP. Pro-abortion MPs need to know that they have constituents who care about unborn babies. You also cannot assume how an MP will think or vote on a particular issue. Most MPs are not fully committed one way or the other on abortion, and will vote differently depending on what the exact issue is.

It's also important to write to MPs who you know are pro-life – this gives them material to use in debates.

SOME TIPS TO MAKE YOUR LETTER EFFECTIVE:

1. Personalization Matters

To have the greatest impact, letters should be in your own words. MPs appreciate genuine, heartfelt messages over copied-and-pasted content. MPs soon recognise if they are receiving identical communications copied and pasted from templates or campaign websites.

You can of course make use of SPUC briefings for information and arguments, but the letter itself has to come

from you – put it into your own words and add your own points. It doesn't matter if you are not the most articulate person, - just make your point as clearly as you can. And if you have a personal story to back up your point, this is even more powerful.

2. Build Relationships

Engage with your MP regularly on various topics, not just pro-life issues. This helps establish rapport and ensures your concerns are taken seriously.

3. Show Gratitude where you can

Express gratitude in your letters, acknowledging the MP's efforts on local or national matters. A sincere thank-you can increase the likelihood of your letter being noticed.

4. Collaborative Efforts

You can increase the strength of your letter by collaborating with others in your constituency so that your MP receives several letters around the same time. If you are part of a local branch of SPUC, or part of a church, you can make an event of it, having everyone get together to write their personal letters at the same time.

REMEMBER...

You are the expert

MPs are not experts on every subject. They have their own favourite topics and special areas of interest; very few MPs are experts in abortion issues, either on the pro-life or the pro-abortion side. Most of your MPs will know relatively little about abortion until you tell them, especially on the nuances of particular policies or bills. They need to be educated, and on this issue, with the help of our briefing material, you are the expert.

Getting a standard response is not a defeat

It means that someone in your MP's office has taken the time to read your letter and record it, and made the decision to send out the standard response.

To send us your MP's response

Getting copies of MP responses is really helpful to us to build intelligence. Please photocopy your MP's letter and post it to the London office, or scan it in and email it to news@spuc.org.uk

CONCLUSION

Handwritten letters to MPs remain one of the most effective advocacy tools. Let's make our voices heard by engaging with our representatives through thoughtful and personalized correspondence. Thank you for your dedication to this important cause.



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