

How YOU Can Make A Difference!

This document is intended to help assist you with letter writing when the real issues are being debated and it is up to all of us to advocate for the rights of people!

Grassroots always grows best in your own backyard. Letter writing does make an impact on our leaders and the issues at hand. Be an Advocate - Let your voice be heard!

GRASSROOTS Letter Writing Guidelines: How To Write To Your Legislature

Your "Message" is Your Statement!

Each contact with elected officials, whether in writing or in person, should include a clear statement about you, your facility and your association. That statement should make it clear that your goal and purpose is to help people with disabilities to live more inclusive and meaningful lives in the community.

What should we say?

Letters have more impact if they are short, to the point, and personal. Any information you can insert into a one-page letter that highlights your agency's experience will add to the effectiveness of that letter. For the same reason, any letter from a parent, consumer or staff member that highlights the current fragility of the system is equally powerful. We hope you will help people you support to write letters to advocate for themselves!

Use your own words - TELL YOUR STORY!!

Avoid form letters and preprinted postcards

Type your letter on personal or business letterhead.

Limit your letter to one page:

Identify yourself and your business operations (ie; "I am a constituent", my home or my workplace is in your district OR I serve people who live in your district", I am a member of the California Rehabilitation Association".)

Limit yourself to one issue (ie; workers comp, supported employment rates)

State how this issue/bill will affect you, your facility, and your patients/consumers

Be polite

Close by asking the legislators for their support or opposition to the legislation referred to in your letter, and ask for a response.

Always send a copy of your letter and the legislator's response to CRA's Government Affairs Office.

Descriptive Sentences for Describing Program Goals Touch all of us, either personally or through our family, friends and community, by the value of programs which enhance the lives of persons with disabilities

Enhance the ability of people to live safe and secure lives

Encourage regular interaction with people who do not share their particular disability

Make it possible for many persons with disabilities to obtain, retain or return to jobs or schools in their community

Allow persons with disabilities to live life as close to the life lived by those who do not share their particular disability

Support families and friends of persons with disabilities to continue positive, productive and enjoyable relationships with their loved ones

To Whom We Should Write The Senators and Assembly Members in your own area should always hear from you. You can write the letter directly to them and send copies to the key Legislators listed below. Or you can write to those below and copy your own Members. In either case, the budget writers and the rank and file Legislators need to get a message from you!