



**National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society**

## How to Write a Letter to Your Legislator

Sharing your story is a great way to energize our grassroots movement and build important relationships with elected officials. Your story is compelling and persuasive because it is authentic; it is your own experience. However, to be sure your story is heard and understood, it is important that you communicate in a clear and organized fashion.

### **First things first**

- Use the proper salutation at the beginning of your story.
  - \*If you're writing your state legislator use, "Dear Senator\_\_\_\_," or "Dear Representative\_\_\_\_"
  - \*If you're writing to your U.S. Senator or Congressperson use, "Dear Senator\_\_\_\_," or "Dear Congresswoman/Congressman\_\_\_\_"
- Identify yourself as a constituent.
- Thank your legislator for their past support. Letting them know that you appreciate their efforts, even if you disagree with their position. Doing this will make them more likely to listen.
- Legislators often receive more complaints than compliments, so it is beneficial if you position yourself as someone who recognizes they are working hard to represent you and your community.

### **Getting to know you**

Use this first part of your story to introduce yourself. Try to keep the following questions in mind when you write your introduction:

- What is your connection to MS?
- What specific bill or issue concerns you?

To ensure your elected official understands how the issue specifically affects you, please refer to only one issue. If there are additional issues that affect you, feel free to write more than one letter.

### **In your own words**

Use the second part of your letter to describe your personal experience. Give your elected official a detailed picture of the affect MS has on your daily life. Keep in mind these questions when you write the body of your story:

- Specifically, what challenge in your life motivated you to write your story?
- How can your elected official help with this issue?

Remember, your voice and your words are persuasive because they are genuine!

### **Just to recap**

Use the last part of your story to remind your elected official why you wrote to them and what action you would like them to take. Keep in mind the following questions as you write the conclusion of your story:

- Why did you write your elected official and what would you like them to do?
- How will their action positively impact your situation?

Please remember to thank your elected official at the end of your story for their time and consideration!