



WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Writing a letter to the editor is an effective way to get your message out. Letters to the editor are an impactful way to share your message with your local community. Letters to the editor are also a powerful tool to reach your member of Congress. If you mention your member of Congress in your letter, often congressional staff will include the “clipping” from your letter in the daily press clips that the member of Congress will read each morning.

TIPS FOR WRITING A GOOD LETTER TO THE EDITOR

KNOW THE REQUIREMENTS: Check the website of the paper you plan to submit your letter to and find what their submission requirements are. Most ask for a short (typically 200 words) letter that can be submitted online or through email. If they don't list submission guidelines online, you can always call and ask what the process is for submitting a letter to the editor.

PICK YOUR TOPIC AND WRITE: Pick a topic you are passionate about. Letters are more likely to get published if they are personal and something you can directly relate to. Follow the peg, problem, promise model below if you need help getting started.

POLISH YOUR PIECE: Make sure to proofread and edit your letter. Feel free to share a draft with the Puerto Rico Statehood Action Network and we'll be glad to help you polish it.

SUBMIT YOUR LETTER: Once your letter is ready to go, submit it to the paper through their recommended submission channel. Typically, letters are submitted through an online form or through a designated email address. If it gets published, send us a copy so we can celebrate with you! If your letter isn't published, it's a great chance to turn it into an email or letter to send directly to the congressional office.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR FORMULA

This is a formula to write a successful letter to the editor. Letters come in all formats, but the format below is a recommended format to start.

- 1 PEG:** This is an interesting fact, anecdote, or story to get people interested in your letter. For example, a personal story on how a specific issue has impacted your work or family.
- 2 PROBLEM:** Here is where you directly address a bill or debate happening before Congress. This is where you can point out, with facts and reasoning, why your argument is right. We recommend 2-3 facts or arguments that link back to your main point.
- 3 PROMISE:** The final section is a promise or solution to solve the problem you've introduced. This often takes the forms of telling your congressman to co-sponsor or vote for legislation that supports statehood for Puerto Rico.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR EXAMPLE

As our nation commemorated Memorial Day, the families of fallen veterans in Puerto Rico continued living as second-class American citizens, despite the sacrifices of Puerto Rican service members. Puerto Ricans can fight and die under the stars and stripes, but currently cannot vote for the President, their Commander-in-Chief. They have no voting representation in the Senate and have only one non-voting representative in the House, despite being American citizens for over 126 years.

It is far past time Congress addresses Puerto Rico's territorial status. The only fair way to do so, while honoring the democratic voices and votes of those residing on the island, is by introducing binding legislation with an offer of statehood. Puerto Rican voters have gone to the polls four times this century to answer a ballot question regarding their status. Each time, statehood was the preferred option among the island's voters.

Statehood for Puerto Rico would encourage economic development to return to the island - creating high-paying jobs and optimizing the quality of life of its residents. Additionally, Puerto Rico statehood would be in America's national security interest. With that said, supporting binding legislation with the offer of statehood for Puerto Rico will ensure that the island's U.S. citizens are able to achieve the equality and full representation they deserve.