

Contacting your State Legislator

By Larry Alferink

The following advice is based on information provided by the State Universities Annuitants Association.

Fundamental “Dos”

- Specifically ask for support of your position
Address your legislator properly
- Write legibly (handwritten letters are fine if they are readable)
- Be brief, to the point, and discuss only one issue in each letter
- If possible, give an example of how the issue affects you personally. Use your own words and your own stationery
- Include your address and sign your name legibly
- Ask the legislator to explain his/her position in their reply
- Write your legislator when they do something of which you approve, not just when you are against something

Fundamental “Don’ts”

- Do not send a postcard
- Do not sign and send a form letter.
- Do not begin on a righteous note (“as a citizen and a taxpayer” and/or “as a concerned citizen”)
- Do not apologize for writing and taking their time. If your letter is short and expresses an opinion, they are happy to give it consideration
- Do not be rude or threatening.
- Do not send a copy of your letter to other legislators; write each one individually
- If you choose to e-mail a legislator, do not use a university e-mail account

How to address letters

When writing to a state senator, state representative, or the governor: The Honorable John Doe (or Jane Doe), State Senator, State Representative, or Governor (address).

For salutation:

Dear Governor Pritzker, Dear Senator, or Dear Representative.

Contact information for elected officials

Contact information for legislators can be found at www.legis.state.il.us. Click on “Legislator Lookup” to search by your address or nine-digit zip code. You can also search for an individual name by using a search engine such as Google. Write the Senator/Representative for the district in which you live.