



Take Action! Contact your Lawmakers

Elected Officials need your vote, so writing personal letters, making phone calls and meeting with them can make a real difference. Policymakers don't hear from constituents as often as they hear from paid industry lobbyists. For every personal direct contact legislators receive from people like you, they assume many more people share the same view. Spending a small amount of time can make a big impact on issues that are important to you.

It's easy and fun to correspond with your elected officials:

Governor Andrew Cuomo: State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224

US Senator Charles Schumer: 313 Hart Senate Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand: 478 Russell Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

US Representative: Look yours up at www.house.gov

NYS Senator: Look yours up at www.nysenate.gov

Assembly member: Look yours up at assembly.state.ny.us

Sample Letter for any issue

SALUTATION: Dear [Title, like Senator or Assemblywoman] [Last name],

INTRODUCTION: As your constituent, I look forward to working with you this year on issues that we both care about. Recently, I learned about the health and environmental impacts that can be caused by [insert topic here, like electronics components, or certain plastics].

PERSONAL INTEREST: As a [mom, dad, caregiver, firefighter, nurse...] I am particularly concerned because [insert your own heartfelt reason for wanting the issue addressed]].

PROBLEM STATEMENT: [See next page for sample language.]

SOLUTION STATEMENT: Therefore, I am writing to ask you to [INSERT DESIRED ACTION, like co-sponsoring or voting for a bill. See the next page for suggestions.]

CLOSING: Please respond to let me know how you intend to act. Thank you for your support on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Your name
Your address

Writing tips:

- Let your lawmaker know that you are a constituent
- Make it personal: "As a mom..." or "As a nurse..."
- Write about the issue of concern, providing 2 -3 sentences about why this is a problem worth solving
- Ask your lawmaker to take action, and include a bill number if one exists
- Ask for a response, and include your name and address

Sample Problem and Solution Statements

Children's Products

PROBLEM: ...toxic chemicals in everyday children's products. Despite recent actions at the Consumer Product Safety Commission, many children's products continue to be made with toxic chemicals such as heavy metals, bisphenol A, chlorine and bromine. These can contribute to serious, lifelong health problems. Because the US chemical management system is broken, strong protections from these and other chemicals do not exist, and our children remain at risk.

SOLUTION: ...support broad chemical policy reform, as well as bills that target specific chemicals that should not be used in children's products. *[There are always timely examples of specific bills. Please contact Clean New York for details.]*

Body Care

PROBLEM: ...the number of toxic chemicals in personal care products and the problems these chemicals can cause in our bodies. Although many chemicals seem safe in small amounts, frequent, combined exposure to them through the numerous products we use every day can lead to cancer, birth defects and other illnesses. No one should have to worry or wonder whether products like shampoo, lotion, and make up are going to harm their health; personal care products on the shelves should be safe!

SOLUTION: ...to support legislation that would eliminate the use of toxic chemicals in personal care products and require thorough testing for human safety.

Plastics

PROBLEM: ...lead, phthalates, bisphenol A and other toxic chemicals used in plastics can lead to a variety of health problems, especially reproductive and brain dysfunctions. No amount of lead is safe, and unlike

other chemicals, endocrine disruptors can have dramatic health effects even at very low levels.

SOLUTION: ...support broad chemical policy reform and legislation that limits use of endocrine disrupting chemicals.

PROBLEM: ...variety of toxic chemicals in my household cleaners, including ammonia, phthalates, and sodium hypochlorite (chlorine bleach). Most cleaning products do not list all of their ingredients, so it is difficult for me to tell which ones are safe and which to avoid. I want to keep my home clean, but will not trade cleanliness for potential health hazards.

SOLUTION: ...support legislation requiring full ingredient disclosure for cleaning products.

PROBLEM: ...heavy metals, plastics and toxic flame retardants that are used in electronic devices. Some of these toxic chemicals can leave the products and enter household dust, thus exposing me and my family. At the end of their useful life, unscrupulous recycling practices, often in developing countries, can release highly toxic chemicals like dioxins and furans into the air.

SOLUTION: ... support legislation to end the export of electronic waste, require tighter standards on the materials used, require extended producer responsibility and promote effective, safe recycling.

Cleaning Products

Electronics