

# HOW TO LOBBY

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Since 1979, Concerned Women for America has been working on tough issues and calling Americans to **pray** and **act** to restore Biblical values among all citizens. This work requires the involvement of concerned citizens like you.

Did you know that many special interest groups have full-time lobbyists in Washington, D.C. and at your state capital? They are paid to present that group's views to senators and representatives and to ask for their votes on



## Yes, You, Can Be a Lobbyist Too!

There is no more influential lobbyist to a legislator, or any other elected official, than the voter back home. Lobbying simply means to promote or secure the passage of legislation by influencing public officials.

**So, if you have a digital device of any kind (phone, tablet, computer, or other), you are positioned to have tremendous influence and impact on our nation and in your state.** It is as easy as emailing, calling, texting, or engaging on social media with your local, state, and national government officials.

## Social Media

Whether you are using Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, or other platforms, make your voice heard. **The current social media world is dominated by left-leaning thinkers. It is critical that we advocate for our values on these platforms.** Social media allows you to share your opinions and hold legislators accountable.

Here are additional tips when influencing via social media:

- ◆ Follow your elected officials on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at a minimum.
- ◆ Express your views on legislation and/or let your elected officials know how you want them to vote. Share arguments that appeal to logic, emotion, and credibility, and be sure to include the legislators' handles in the posts.
- ◆ Retweet good tweets and comment on the tweets in which you disagree.
- ◆ Use fonts, phrases, and colors to bring attention.
- ◆ Use your relational networks to build support.

## Email or Written Communication

Email is most often used in today's electronic world. However, many still prefer to type/handwrite and mail a letter. This section will cover both types of communication.

### Email:

- ◆ Federal level: Legislators use online contact forms for electronic communication. Govtrack.us is a good site for finding who represents you at the federal level. Once you are on the legislator's website, locate the contact link, and then choose the online contact form.
- ◆ State level: Many of the statewide elected officials use online contact forms. If they don't, you will need to locate your legislators' official email addresses. Openstates.org is a good site for finding who represents you at the state and local levels, along with their contact information.

### Written Letters:

Use the salutation "Dear Senator (last name)" or "Dear Representative (last name)."

Use the addresses below:

The Honorable (first and last name)  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable (first and last name)  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Follow the *Quick Tips for All Communication* in addition to the following when emailing/writing:

- ◆ Be Original: An email or letter you write yourself is the most effective. Avoid copy/pasting a form email.
- ◆ Ask for an Answer: Ask your elected official to state his or her views on an issue and ask how he or she intends to vote.
- ◆ Say Thanks: Most people write when they only disagree with the way their legislator votes. It's important to let them know you appreciate a favorable vote, too. Legislators value the encouragement!
- ◆ Make it Easy to Read: Typed letters are best, but handwritten letters are acceptable. Write as neatly as possible.

## Phone Calls

Calling an elected official's office is an effective way to lobby. Don't be intimidated! The easiest place to locate an office phone number is online. **Tip: when calling your U.S. Representative or U.S. Senators, consider calling one of their local offices instead of the Washington, D.C. office.**

## QUICK TIPS for All Communication:

**Be Informed:** Get your facts straight. Quote experts on the topic or use actual news clippings or website links to help prove your point.

**Be Specific:** State the specific issue that concerns you and, if possible, include the bill number and/or title.

**Be Brief:** Cover only one topic and try to keep your letter to only one page.

**Be Polite:** You should be firm but courteous. Anger and sarcasm will not win any points with your reader.

**Don't Preach:** You want to influence your elected official's vote, not convert them to your religion.

Once you are informed on the issue, make the call. Be sure the person who answers the call takes your name and contact information. Be specific on the issue, be polite, thank the person for taking your call, and ask for a response from the elected official.



## Letters to the Editor

Letter to the editors (print or online) are widely read by the public and elected officials and are an excellent forum to express your viewpoint. The following are some tips for effective letters:

- ◆ Adhere to the word count guidelines for letter writing provided by the publication.
- ◆ Keep your letters simple, direct, and well-reasoned.

Expressing your anger is fine but avoid hysteria. Be careful to avoid unproven assertions, or you will jeopardize your credibility.

- ◆ Cover one topic at a time. Do not try to discuss more than one issue, or your letter will lose its effectiveness.
- ◆ Write while the issue is hot – within one or two days to have maximum impact!
- ◆ Use short quotations from authoritative sources.
- ◆ If your letter is in response to a publication's article, editorial, or picture, specify the article's headline, the author, and date.
- ◆ Don't write to the same publication too often.

## Get Started!

A key to being an influential lobbyist is to stay informed and up to date on key issues.

1. Sign up for CWA national's e-alerts at [ConcernedWomen.org](https://ConcernedWomen.org).
2. Get connected with CWA in your state at [ConcernedWomen.link/states](https://ConcernedWomen.link/states)
3. Visit [ConcernedWomen.org](https://ConcernedWomen.org) regularly for up-to-date articles, talking points, videos, podcasts, and vodcasts.
4. Follow CWA on our social media platforms.
5. Commit your plans to the Lord every time you communicate with officials as you set out to be salt and light in your community, state, and nation.

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WOMEN *for* AMERICA

To keep current on this issue and others, follow us on social media.

