

***** Share the Nutrition Education Story With Your Lawmakers *****

For the next two years, your lawmakers will make hundreds of decisions that will affect nutrition education programs, as well as your profession/job. Make sure they decide in your favor by getting to know them now and remind them how important nutrition education is for our country.

As your representative and senators begin work on critical legislation, you want nutrition education at the top of their minds. Here's how to share your personal story with your lawmakers:

1. Meet your lawmakers. Make an appointment to meet your lawmakers or a member of their staff either in your own area or in their Washington office. When they are in your district, attend an event they host (i.e. Town Hall Meeting). Be sure to introduce yourself, tell them about your profession and the challenges you face, and that you're a member of SNE. This is especially important now if you have new lawmakers.

2. Write a letter. Congratulate new lawmakers on the election, or if your district has changed, introduce yourself and let your lawmaker know about your concerns as a nutrition education specialist. Keep your letter concise, but mention the same critical points noted above - your profession, your concerns and your SNE membership.

3. Build relationships with your lawmakers. Why not invite your representative to a local meeting to speak?

4. Keep in touch. Throughout the year, stay in touch with your lawmakers when you know they are considering legislation that affects nutrition education issues. Send them articles ([via fax or e-mail](#)) about critical nutrition education issues. During this session of Congress, lawmakers are likely to consider significant child nutrition reauthorization and health care bills, among many other measures.

It's important to make our voice heard!

Communicating with Elected Officials

To find your representative's phone number, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202)224-3121 and ask for your Senator's and/or Representative's office. Remember that telephone calls are often taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue to which you wish to comment.

Tips on E-Mailing / Writing Congress

The letter is the most popular choice of communication with a congressional office. If you decide to e-mail a letter, this list of helpful suggestions will improve the effectiveness of the letter:

1. Your purpose for writing should be stated in the first paragraph of the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly, e.g., House bill: H. R. ____, Senate bill: S. ____.
2. Be courteous, to the point, and include key information, using examples to support your position.
3. Address only one issue in each letter; and, if possible, keep the letter to one page.

Addressing Correspondence:

To a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
__ (Rm.#) __ (name of) Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last Name):

To a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
__ (Rm.#) __ (name of) House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (Last Name):

Note: When writing to the Chair of a Committee or the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address them as:

Dear Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman:

or Dear Mr. Speaker: