



TIPS TO WRITING AN EFFECTIVE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

MI Climate Action Network

- **Make one clear argument.** Choose one specific issue to address in your letter and offer your argument or support in the opening lines. Make it clear, simple and compelling.
- **Be timely.** If your letter is responding to an article in the newspaper or an event, make sure to respond to the article within three days of its publication.
- **Cite the article.** If you are writing directly in response to an article you've read in the publication, be sure to mention the title and date of the article you're responding to in one of your first two sentences.
- **Be brief.** Generally, 150 words or less is best. This way, you get to the point quickly and powerfully. Letters longer than 200 words will likely not get published. If you can't keep the letter to that length, you may want to consider asking someone to help you edit it or write a longer length op-ed instead.
- **Support your point.** Make sure you include evidence and reasons to back up your argument.
- **Make a call to action.** Try to focus on the positive, but then wrap up your letter by what you think needs to happen now. An important ask right now- for Michigan policymakers to prioritize climate action and to commit to move off fossil fuels by 2050.
- **Follow up and be persistent.** If you have not heard back from the paper within a week of sending your letter to the editor, send an email or make a follow-up call to check on its status. However, be aware that they may be overflowing with other letters of concern as well. Also, if your letter is not published, don't get discouraged and keep writing.
- **Include your contact information.** This includes your name, address, and contact information. Often they want to know you live locally.

Sample Topics:

- The recent election and need for climate leaders.
- Weather extremes, their impact, increasing frequency and relation to climate change.
- Positive news about cities moving toward 100% clean energy, or a new solar or wind development.
- The latest IPCC report and the urgent need to bold climate action.
- Fossil fuel consumption and relation to climate change
- The need to have more pro-climate action policymakers in order to pass critical climate policies.