



Sample Letter Writing Tool

Lawmakers like to hear from the people in their district. Legislative offices review handwritten letters, and they are often more powerful than emails. This toolkit will go over the steps for hosting a letter writing party – a simple gathering that can have a big impact.

Find your legislator using this link:

<https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps>

1. Set a time to gather with your family, friends, study group, book club, etc. (Snacks and music make it more fun!)
2. Print materials to help people write their letters: [Talking Points](#), [Sample Letter](#), [One Pager](#). You can find other, [more detailed resources here](#).
3. Gather other necessary supplies: pens, paper, envelopes, and stamps. You can also request printed postcards from the #NoDeathPenaltyOH campaign.
4. Have a computer or tablet out to help people find their senator and representative [here](#).
5. Share the letter-writing tips, below, with your party goers and help them write simple but meaningful letters to their lawmakers.

6. Address, stamp, and mail the letters. Or hand deliver the stack to their district or Capitol office.

Tips for Letter Writing

1. Tell them you support SB 103 and HB 183.
2. Be clear and concise.
3. Share your personal perspective and reasons as to why you want the death penalty repealed.
4. Support your story with facts and statistics.
5. Include suggestions, not just criticism.

On the next page you will find a sample letter to help guide your own. However, remember to make it personal and have a connection to you and why you care about this issue.

Sample Letter:

Dear [Legislator's Name],

[Introduce yourself!] I am writing you today to ask you to support HB 183/SB 103, which would abolish Ohio's death penalty. I live in [Name of city or your district] and [I voted for you (if true)].

I oppose the death penalty because...[choose one, all or fill in your own]:

- The death penalty violates my faith's pro-life teachings and the inherent dignity of a person.
- The death penalty hurts the co-victims, or the families of murder victims subjecting them to decades of what-ifs and re-opening old wounds every time the case is mentioned in the news. Resources currently allocated for the death penalty should be repurposed for the needs of victims' families.
- Attorney General David Yost recently said that the system is "breaking down" and yet Ohioans are paying millions of dollars each year for a broken death penalty. Public opinion is clear that Ohioans no longer want to pay for this system and favor repeal.
- 185 people have been officially exonerated and freed after serving time on death row for a crime they did not commit. For every five people Ohio has executed, one person has been exonerated and released from death row. No one knows how many more innocent people are under sentence of death, or how many have actually been executed. Surely we can all agree that the risk of executing even one innocent person is too much.
- Law enforcement officials are on the record discussing how traumatic it is to take part in an execution. We can do a better job protecting the physical and mental health of our prison workers by eliminating the death penalty.

[Include your personal story about why it is so important to you.] For example:

- I have been advocating against the death penalty for x amount of years.
- I have read the stories of murder victim's family and hear their pain.
- I am a social worker who has seen the effects of our criminal justice system on individuals.
- Pro-life and human dignity are important to me because I am very connected to my faith in these ways...
- Human rights are important to me because...

We know that we can be kept safe and hold dangerous individuals accountable for their actions without the death penalty because it's what we do the vast majority of the time.

[Thank the legislator.]

[Signature]