

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for choosing to write for the Armenian Weekly! To make sure we're all on the same page (literally), we have prepared a few writing tips, in the case that you have never written a letter to the editor before, and need a few pointers.

What is a LTTE?

Letters to the Editor (or LTTE) are short, opinionated blurbs which are located in the Opinion spread of the Armenian Weekly, where our other opinion pieces (editorials and op-eds) are also housed. They can take a position for or against an issue, or simply inform, or both. They can convince readers by using emotions, or facts, or emotions and facts combined. They differ from op-eds in that they typically do not require as much research, and are usually short and tight, rarely longer than 300 words. Sometimes it's the case that someone on our staff will reach out to you regarding a comment you left on an article, to suggest submission to the Weekly as a Letter to the Editor. We do this with comments that we think fill this need in the newspaper's content, but you are under no obligation to accept (though formatting your comment as a LTTE will require very little from you, as it has been pre-selected by our staff because it already appears to fit the mold of an LTTE).

Useful Tips:

- **Try to respond to an actual article published in the paper.** The best letters are those that are in response to an article that ran in the paper and many papers require that you reference the specific article. Your letter will have a greater chance of being printed if it is in response to an editorial, op-ed, or front page story. Begin your letter by citing the original story by name, date, and author. (Example: "I was disappointed to see that The Post's May 18 editorial 'School Vouchers Are Right On' omitted some of the key facts in the debate..." or "I strongly disagree with [author's name] narrow view on women's reproductive rights. ['Name of Op-Ed,' date]") We will print LTTEs noting a lack of coverage on a specific issue, but if this is the topic you are writing about, begin by stating your concern that the paper hasn't focused on this important issue.
- **Share your expertise.** If you have relevant qualifications to the topic you're addressing be sure to include that in your letter. If you are a doctor writing about a health issue, a Prius owner writing about hybrid cars, or you are writing about energy issues and you have solar panels on your roof—share that information up front.
- **Refute, advocate, and make a call to action.** Most letters to the editor follow a standard format. Open your letter by refuting the claim made in the original story the paper ran. Then use the next few sentences to back up your claims and advocate for your position. Try to focus on the positive. Then wrap your letter up by explaining what you think needs to happen now, make your call to action.
- **Keep it short and address only one subject.** Many newspapers have strict limits on the length of letters and have limited space to publish them. Keeping your letter brief will help assure that your important points are not cut out by the newspaper.