



The Internet has completely changed how citizens and lawmakers interact with one another. More people are getting involved in public policy and lawmakers are receiving more messages from constituents than ever before. Now, the best way to stand out from the thousands of standard email form letters legislative offices receive is to *personalize your message*.

Letters and emails drafted by real people put a face on an issue. They give policy makers an anecdote or story to backup the issues brought up in your letters. But, I know what you are thinking: “*What about the times when I have used the AAFP letter on Speak Out?*” Thankfully, it’s simple: *adding a personal element to your letter will separate it from all the other messages in your legislator’s inbox on the same topic.*

And, your personal messages don’t have to be long. Two or three sentences at the beginning of your letter or e-mail should be enough to let your legislator know that you understand the issue and how it affects family physicians.

#### Tips for Personalizing Your Messages:

- Provide examples from your own practice: show how the issues affect you and your patients.
- Stay professional: demonstrate your passion for the issue without using overly-emotional language.
- Remember that you are a voter: tell your legislator how the issue will affect your community -- and his or her constituents.

Sharing your stories with your lawmakers helps you connect with them on a personal level and tells them how policies impact your professional life. The personal connection you make with your legislator not only will help the AAFP advocate for sound health care policy on Capitol Hill – but also will keep you on the list of constituents they call to sound out how a bill may affect practicing physicians, like you.

Sincerely,  
Erica Fischer  
Grassroots Advocacy Specialist