



Tips for Making Your Voice Heard - How to Contact Your Legislators and Advocate for Issues Important to You

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for Kansas Honey Producers' Association*



So, you want to contact your legislator?

Here are a few tips –

Know your stuff. Do a little homework on the issues important to you, and the legislation currently impacting those issues.

Great resources for Kansans who are ready to get involved!!

- KansasLegislature.org - <http://www.kslegislature.org/li/> - can find legislators and bills
- KRC's Legislative and Policy Watch E-Updates - <https://kansasruralcenter.org/legislative-policy-watch/> - good weekly updates and information on Kansas legislative sessions and issue.
- Women for Kansas - <http://womenforkansas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/StateGovtHow2GetInvolved.pdf> - excellent tip sheet with all kinds of information for contacting your legislator and advocating effectively.
- They also have a great newsletter that always has helpful information - *News We Can Use* – Women for Kansas. <http://womenforkansas.org/>.



Find the right person.

Find your legislators. Or, the legislators involved with the issues important to you. Or, the legislative aide that will get your information where it needs to go.

Resources to help you find the right person.

•OpenStates.org -

https://openstates.org/find_your_legislator/.

This site is great – you don't even need to know your district!! 😊

•KansasLegislature.org -

<http://www.kslegislature.org/li/> .



Make contact!!

We often hear from legislators that the best ways to contact them are: call, visit in person, or (we recently learned that this can be very effective) write a letter and mail it snail-mail. Legislators get deluged with e-mails, so that might not be the best way to go.

- Call
- Visit in person
- Write a real letter. Here's a great resource to help with writing an effective letter. Community Tool Box - <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/letters-to-elected-officials/main>.



Communicate effectively.

- Introduce yourself and make a personal connection.
- Tell a story that resonates with policymakers.
<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/personal-testimony/main> (This is an excellent resource for telling your story effectively – Community Tool Box).
- Incorporate research findings and analysis, if available.
- Make an ask. Ask the policymaker for assistance.
- Prepare and plan follow-up conversations.



Be nice, but be persuasive.

Remember, the legislators are there to serve you. They might not feel like hearing what you have to say but it's their job to listen. Gently, be sure you make your point, and be sure to follow up.



Excellent General Resources –

- Community Tool Box - <http://ctb.ku.edu/en>
- Kansas Rural Center Advocacy Tool Kit - <https://kansasruralcenter.org/community-food-solutions-for-a-healthier-kansas-resources/>



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Thank you!