The most effective way to contact a legislator is in person. Telephone, email and letters are used when personal contact cannot be made.

*Tips for all forms of contact:*

- Know the legislator’s name, title and contact information
- Identify yourself as a constituent (i.e. My name is Mary Jones and I’m a constituent)
- Be brief and to the point on one issue
- Mention the specific bill number (i.e. S.123)
- Request action (i.e. vote against bill H.2000)
- Thank them for their time
- Be positive and not argumentative
- Report your response to The SCEA
- Follow-up with a thank you letter

In-person contact tips:

- Professional appearance
- Make an appointment, if possible
- Leave a message for legislators not in their office
- When sending a message to them on the floor of the Statehouse, stay near the door of the chambers (and ask the desk attendants to show you a picture, if you have never met them before)

Telephone contact tips:

- Write down and practice your comments
- When calling a legislator at home, call only at reasonable hours (before 9 p.m.)
- Leave a message on an answering machine or with a person answering the phone

Email contact tips:

- Never send email to a distribution group of legislators
- Check for spelling errors
- Limit size of text message to one paragraph

Letter contact tips:

- Handwritten letters are preferable (form letters and petitions are not as effective)
- Check for spelling errors
• Always put your name and address on the outside of the envelope
• Greeting line-Dear Senator or Representative John Doe
• Outside envelope address and inside letter address -
  ▪ The Honorable John Doe
    S.C. House of Representatives
    P.O. Box 1186
    Columbia, SC 29211-1867
  ▪ The Honorable John Doe
    S.C. Senate
    P.O. Box 142
    Columbia, SC 29202-0142

Sample Letter

Date

The Honorable John Doe
S.C. House of Representatives
P.O. Box 1186
Columbia, SC 29211-1867

RE: Bill No.____

Dear Representative Doe:

(Introductory paragraph: Identify yourself –name, profession and a constituent; state the issue of concern and request action)

(Paragraph 2: Use The SCEA talking points to explain and defend your position)

(Paragraph 3: Thank the legislator for their time and restate your action request)

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(Your contact information)

Who are your legislators?

Use this site to find your statehouse representatives

http://www.scstatehouse.gov/legislatorssearch.php