

Guidelines for Writing Letters to the Editor on Behalf of a Candidate or Cause

Thank you for writing a letter to the editor (LTE) in support of a Democratic candidate or cause! It will make a difference. Readers are often more interested in what their neighbors think than what the pundits are saying.

Here are a few tips to ensure that your letter will be printed and that it will be well received by readers.

Check with Your Candidate's Campaign

Your candidate may have some suggestions for topics to emphasize, topics to avoid, and best timing for your letter to appear.

Submit Your Letter to Every Outlet

In Maine, it's possible that multiple outlets may print your letter. Don't be shy! Send your letter to them all.

Stay Within Word Limits

Since you are going to send your letter to every outlet, stay within the lowest word limit.

Name Your Candidate

Be sure to name your candidate, the race they are running, and the towns they will represent.

Personalize It

More than ever, a litany of facts turns people off. Tell a story. Let readers know how your candidate has made a difference in your life. Perhaps you've known them as a member of your community; or they intervened on your behalf with local government; or gave you hope with a piece of legislation they sponsored and passed that was important to you in your own life.

Keep it Concise

Short words, short sentences, and short paragraphs will keep the attention of your readers.

Remain Credible

Undersell rather than oversell. Don't exaggerate.

Take the High Road

Be respectful. You may want to express concerns about an opponent, but keep to principles, not personalities.

Call to Action

I hope that every constituent in _____ (towns) will vote on _____ (date) for _____ (candidate) to _____ (serve our community... work on our behalf... continue to advocate for...)

How to Submit Your Letter

The following information may have changed. Be sure to check each paper's Letter to the Editor page.

Sign with your name and town. Provide your phone number if requested. Phone numbers won't be published; it is just to verify that you are the author.

Bangor Daily News
letters@bangordailynews.com
250-word limit

PenBay Pilot
editor@penbaypilot.com

Midcoast Villager
https://www.midcoastvillager.com/site/forms/online_services/letter_editor/ 350-word limit Monday at noon deadline for consideration in the Thursday edition Note: The Midcoast Villager is the latest evolution of community news for Knox and Waldo counties, combining the coverage and legacies

Here's an Example

I'll be among the voters in Belfast, Belmont, and Northport proudly casting my ballot this year to send Rep. Jan Dodge back to the Maine House of Representative, while shedding a tear that she will term out in 2026.

Rep. Dodge must be one of the hardest working representatives in the legislature. I've seen her at local meetings and events, where she listens, asks questions, and – on request – will offer her knowledge and experience.

I've heard from neighbors about how responsive she's been to their needs and concerns.

I've been amazed by her activism on the legislature's Education and Cultural Affairs Committee and the dozens of critical bills she has sponsored on many topics, such as retirement benefits for state employees and teachers; the safety and comfort of residents in long term care facilities; care for abandoned animals; accessibility to communication for deaf and hard-of-hearing patients; and increasing property tax exemptions for veterans. It's clear she cares about other people and she does something about it!

Finally, since my parents were music teachers, I have a special appreciation for Rep. Dodge's 30 years teaching music in public schools and the fact that her mom was also a teacher. I love that she lives and serves in the community where she grew up.

I hope that every constituent in Belfast, Belmont and Northport will vote to send her back to the legislature with a resounding mandate to continue working on our behalf!