



Letter-writing to Your Elected Leaders

Letters, e-mails and calls to General Assembly members can be surprisingly effective, as most elected officials are keenly aware of what their constituents are thinking. A few tips:

- *State at the outset that you are a constituent and include your full name and address, with ZIP code under your signature.*
- *Clearly state your reason for writing.*
- *Explain how the issue affects you or your institution. Personal anecdotes are always more effective than using a "form" letter.*
- *Cover only one topic per letter and keep your letter to one page.*
- *If you want a response, specifically ask for one.*
- *Be sure to thank the legislator.*

SAMPLE LETTER TO A LEGISLATOR

Date

Dear Senator (or Delegate) _____:

(Identify yourself and mention that you are a constituent, if you are one. Identify the issue, and any reason(s) you may have for a special interest in the issue, such as how many people are impacted.)

I am writing you today to ask your support in closing the healthcare insurance coverage gap that exists for 400,000 Virginians, including _____ right here in _____. These members of our community often forego life preserving care and are forced to rely on hospitals or free clinics for health emergencies. Virginians in this healthcare coverage gap include low-income working adults, veterans, people with disabilities and those who are ineligible for Virginia's restrictive Medicaid program.

So far the General Assembly has not closed this healthcare coverage gap, despite the fact that all the costs for expanding coverage would be covered by federal tax dollars and would generate needed resources for Virginia, its hospitals and its residents. Virginia loses more than \$4.4 million per day by not addressing this need.

The faith community is asking all of our legislators to close the coverage gap because it is a moral imperative that we care for those who in the Commonwealth who are less fortunate than we are. Will you provide leadership in the General Assembly to address Virginia's health care coverage gap?

Thank you very much for your time and any efforts you take to increase the number of Virginians with access to comprehensive health coverage.

Sincerely,

(Include your name and address)

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, 1716 E. Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23223

www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org 804-643-2474