

## Templates and Tips for Writing your Legislator 4.7.23

In this document you will find tips for writing as well as templates to use and personalize.

### Identify yourself as a constituent

Legislators appreciate hearing from their constituents. They are elected to represent YOUR views. And legislators and their staff are much more receptive once they know they're talking to a constituent. Make it clear that you live in their district by sharing your name and address.

- ❖ Contact your own legislative district's legislators [[Find them here](#)]

### Tips when contacting your legislator

- Clearly state that you are a constituent in the opening (if you are one). Share your name and address
- Share that you're an educator, Education Minnesota member, and/or have kids in public schools
- Before writing, have a thorough understanding of the issue
- Be specific and be accurate
- Establish credibility by sharing your position in a courteous, factual and straightforward manner
- Ask for concrete action and solicit support
- Thank them for their time and follow up with a thank you note
- Identify the issue at the beginning of your email/letter
- Be short, succinct, and thorough. Reference a specific bill number whenever possible
- Clearly ask for legislators' support and give specific examples of how the legislation might affect you and your community
- Remember you are the expert, identify yourself and provide the background for your expertise
- If you want a reply, specifically ask for one in the closing, "I would love to hear from you" works well
- Include in the thank you that you will follow up with more information in the future

### TEMPLATE LETTERS

Sample for Governor Tim Walz <https://mn.gov/governor/contact/>

Dear Governor Walz,

Minnesota's school staffing shortage was already a growing problem before COVID-19 hit, but now it's at crisis levels where districts are scrambling to hire and keep teachers and other school staff. Educators are leaving the profession in droves and more and more college students are opting for different careers.

We need competitive compensation packages that attract the best educators to the profession and keep them in our schools. That includes offering sustainable pensions that recognize and reward educators' hard work on behalf of students.

As your constituent, I'm asking you to support increased funding from the state of Minnesota to better fund our teacher pensions. The current level provided in the shared budget target is not the investment needed to correct the underfunding that has occurred over the past 20 years. It's understood that everything can't be fixed in one session, but this is the time to start by making a bigger investment.

We appreciate all your support for education across the state, but without your help on pensions, staffing shortages won't end anytime soon. They will only get worse unless you and the Minnesota Legislature acts now. A reliable pension that honors the work of teachers and school staff will help recruit and retain the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration.



**Sample for House Speaker Melissa Hortman** [rep.melissa.hortman@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.melissa.hortman@house.mn.gov)

Dear House Speaker Melissa Hortman,

Minnesota's school staffing shortage was already a growing problem before COVID-19 hit, but now it's at crisis levels where districts are scrambling to hire and keep teachers and other school staff. Educators are leaving the profession in droves and more and more college students are opting for different careers.

We need competitive compensation packages that attract the best educators to the profession and keep them in our schools. That includes offering sustainable pensions that recognize and reward educators' hard work on behalf of students.

As the Speaker of the House, I'm asking you to support increased funding from the state of Minnesota to better fund our teacher pensions. The current level provided in the shared budget target is not the investment needed to correct the underfunding that has occurred over the past 20 years. It's understood that everything can't be fixed in one session, but this is the time to start by making a bigger investment.

We appreciate all your support for education across the state, but without your help on pensions, staffing shortages won't end anytime soon. They will only get worse unless you and the Minnesota Legislature acts now. A reliable pension that honors the work of teachers and school staff will help recruit and retain the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Sample for Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic** <https://www.senate.mn/members/email-form/1193>

Dear Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic,

Minnesota's school staffing shortage was already a growing problem before COVID-19 hit, but now it's at crisis levels where districts are scrambling to hire and keep teachers and other school staff. Educators are leaving the profession in droves and more and more college students are opting for different careers.

We need competitive compensation packages that attract the best educators to the profession and keep them in our schools. That includes offering sustainable pensions that recognize and reward educators' hard work on behalf of students.

As the Senate Majority Leader, I'm asking you to support increased funding from the state of Minnesota to better fund our teacher pensions. The current level provided in the shared budget target is not the investment needed to correct the underfunding that has occurred over the past 20 years. It's understood that everything can't be fixed in one session, but this is the time to start by making a bigger investment.

We appreciate all your support for education across the state, but without your help on pensions, staffing shortages won't end anytime soon. They will only get worse unless you and the Minnesota Legislature acts now. A reliable pension that honors the work of teachers and school staff will help recruit and retain the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Sample for Senator Mary Kunesch (if you are a constituent) <https://www.senate.mn/members/email-form/1242>**

Dear Senator Mary Kunesch,

Educators are leaving the profession in droves and more and more college students are opting for different careers. I know through your advocacy and support that you are aware of these issues and your work to support educators is appreciated.

We need competitive compensation packages that attract the best educators to the profession and keep them in our schools. That includes offering sustainable pensions that recognize and reward educators' hard work on behalf of students.

After years and years of the underfunding of our pension systems by the state of Minnesota it is time to right those wrongs. As the chair of the education finance committee, I'm asking you to support increased funding from the employer and state of Minnesota to better fund our teacher pensions. While it's understood that everything can't be fixed in one session, this is the time for the state of Minnesota to start making a strong investment.

They will only get worse unless the Minnesota Legislature acts now. A reliable pension that honors the work of teachers and school staff will help recruit and retain the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Sample for Representative Cheryl Youakim (if you are a constituent) [rep.cheryl.youakim@house.mn.gov](mailto:rep.cheryl.youakim@house.mn.gov)**

Dear Representative Cheryl Youakim,

Educators are leaving the profession in droves and more and more college students are opting for different careers. I know through your advocacy and support that you are aware of these issues and your work to support educators is appreciated.

We need competitive compensation packages that attract the best educators to the profession and keep them in our schools. That includes offering sustainable pensions that recognize and reward educators' hard work on behalf of students.

After years and years of the underfunding of our pension systems by the state of Minnesota it is time to right those wrongs. As the chair of the education finance committee, I'm asking you to support increased funding from the employer and state of Minnesota to better fund our teacher pensions. While it's understood that everything can't be fixed in one session, this is the time for the state of Minnesota to start making a strong investment.

They will only get worse unless the Minnesota Legislature acts now. A reliable pension that honors the work of teachers and school staff will help recruit and retain the best educators for our students.

Thank you for your consideration.