Writing A Letter to the Editor or Op-Ed

Newspapers publish Letters to the Editor (LTEs) and Opposite the Editorial (Op-Ed) pieces as a space for public debate on opinions or to discuss issues missed by the regular news. They should be written with a clear opinion, and even better if its problem-solution oriented. Opinion sections are among the most read sections in the newspaper -- legislators often read the Opinion section to get a sense of what their constituents are passionate about.

Before You Begin Writing...

Pay attention to submission requirements (word length & how to submit) -- submission requirements are typically found in the Opinion section of the newspaper

- Letters to the Editor (LTEs) are generally 200 words
- Opinion Pieces (Op-Eds) are range from (600-700 words)

Below is submission information and links for major newspapers around the state

- The Akron Beacon Journal (email vop@thebeaconjournal.com)
- The Cincinnati Enquirer
- Cleveland.com (The Plain Dealer, Sun News Editor)
- The Columbus Dispatch
- Dayton Daily News
- The Toledo Blade

Read other LTEs & Op-Eds in that newspaper to get a sense of the criteria they use. If you have a relationship, call or discuss the opinion piece with the editor before submitting.

*For example, sometimes editors feel a story or particular angle has been exhausted and may indicate the need for a fresh angle. Relationships are easier to establish with local or community papers.*
Writing an LTE or Op-ed

The order of your points and content is important: Keep your priority content at the top, editors have the discretion to shorten your submission and normally do so from the bottom.

Be concise and efficient with your words: Make sure every sentence has its own purpose.

Stay on one message and don’t use jargon: Make sure you know your message, what you want to say, and use clear and simple language—short words and sentences go a long way!

If you have a strong personal story, include it (a compelling human interest story goes a long way to hook editors and readers)

Reference a former article that the newspaper wrote, or an event that happened in the community, and connect it to what your content

**Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!**

Be sure to include your name, city, and contact information

It is best to submit your piece via email, either in the body of your email or as an attachment