How to Write to Your Lawmakers on Behalf of Your Breed Club or Parent Club

Writing a letter on behalf of your breed or parent club is different from writing on your own behalf. You are representing the entire club. Keep it respectful and concise. Be clear about the bill number/proposal you are referring to, who the club represents, and the club's position on the proposal or specific part of the proposal you are commenting on. Be clear on "the ask": For example, if you are opposing a bill, clearly ask them to not advance the measure.

Legislation impacting dogs and breeds can be emotional. It's fine to express the club's passion for their dogs, but keep it respectful - including being respectful of other breeds/breeders. Never denigrate other breeds or breeders. Also, remember that shorter statements are more likely to be read. If you want to add details, consider linking to providing footnotes with reputable studies or references. This will add credibility to your letter without reducing the likelihood it will be read.

Place on club letterhead if possible. If official letterhead isn't available, consider creating a document that includes the club's logo at the top of your letter.

Start Your letter with the proper salutation

The Honorable <name of legislator>

Address

Subject: *Insert Bill Number and your position (i.e. Oppose HB 123 Banning Tail Docking)*

Dear <Enter official title and last name> :

Paragraph 1: The <insert club name> is writing today to ask you to <support/oppose/ express concerns about>. *Include the bill number and topic (for example, "Our club is writing to respectfully ask you to oppose House Bill 123, which would prohibit ear cropping in the state…").*

Paragraph 2: State briefly who you are (how long you have been in existence, your status as the official national breed club, etc.). If appropriate, mention the number of constituent members you have (for example: The XYZ parent club represents 500 members in your state), so they understand that you are speaking on behalf of members directly impacted by the bill.

Paragraph 3: Mention positive club activities in the district/state – Quickly mention the number of events you may have held in the state (shows, classes, clinics etc.) and consider a couple specific examples if relevant. You may wish to consider using some statistics from the economic impact of dog shows and economic impact of national specialties handouts to help the legislators understand the many benefits of your events in their district/state. If you have many to mention, consider attaching a separate one page document outlining your club's impact.

Paragraph 4: Explain how the bill would impact your breed or members. Consider sharing links to reputable scientific studies or statistics to further demonstrate your expertise and addressing any false claims that may have been made by activists or opponents. Share any activities/studies/etc that you have done to further promote the health of your breed (for the sake of space, you may wish to reference it briefly here and include this on a separate handout). **Focus solely on your breed, on which you are the recognized experts. Do not mention other breeds/breeders – allow those parent clubs to speak for themselves. Speaking about other breeds dilutes your message about your breed, and could allow activists to divide purebred dog clubs and breeders by providing negative or potentially incorrect information about other dogs.**

Paragraph 5: Let them know you share their passion for the wellbeing of animals, and offer to be a resource and expert. Close your email with who they can contact and their phone number/email should they wish to discuss the issue further or reach out for more expertise (if possible, consider a contact in the state).

Sincerely,
Your Name
Address
Telephone/email address