



# How to Communicate with Your Legislator

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**PHONE CALL AND/OR EMAIL TO ASK FOR AN APPOINTMENT** -- for Decoding Dyslexia members who will attend Dyslexia Advocacy Day in Annapolis on March 18th, please make an appointment to meet with your legislator as soon as possible. Here are some tips.

Once you know [who represents you](#), you are ready to call and/or [email](#) for an appointment. Here are some tips for asking for an appointment if you call (if you email, please use the form pop-up on the Maryland Legislature website located on the bottom left of the [home page](#) -- it is very easy and goes directly to your legislators).

1. I am (name) and I live in your district in (town). My (son/daughter) will also be attending.
2. I am a member of Decoding Dyslexia MD, a grassroots group of parents and educators concerned about reading instructions for students with dyslexia.
3. We will be in Annapolis for **Dyslexia Advocacy Day** on Wednesday, March 18 and would like to stop by to talk about dyslexia in our (county) public schools. Is (Legislator) available anytime between 10:45 and close of business to talk about dyslexia?
4. Nail down a date and time, get a contact name and number and provide your contact information as well.
5. Confirm the appointment with an email if you call.
6. Additional information will be provided each attendee during the briefing session on Wed. March 18 from 9:30-10:30. You will receive a packet for your legislator(s) and one with talking points for you to use.
7. Information is also posted on the DD-MD website:  
[www.decodingdyslexiamd.weebly.com](http://www.decodingdyslexiamd.weebly.com)



**Letter to a Legislator --** the format below can be used and is standard business letter. If you prefer to send a letter or appointment request through the Legislature's Home Page, [CLICK HERE](#). Scroll to bottom left and click on Voice My Opinion -- follow the instructions!

(Month) (Day) (Year)

The Honorable (First name) (Last name)

(Room Number),

Maryland General Assembly, MD (Zip Code)

RE: (state the topic or include the bill number, author and subject if you are writing to support or oppose a particular legislative bill)

Dear (Delegate or Senator): insert name

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a member of Decoding Dyslexia MD and I live in your district.

(State why you support or oppose the bill or other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.)

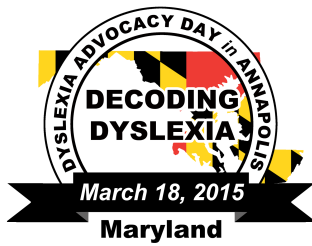
(Include a personal story--keep your story brief and hit the highlights only. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family member and your community.)

(Tell your delegate how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response. Be sure to include your name and address in your email and/or on your written letter.

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

Print Name, Street Address, City, State, Zip



## TIPS FOR WRITING, SENDING AN E-MAIL OR CALLING A LEGISLATOR

- Always be courteous and informative in your communication. Never say anything you don't want to see on the front page of the Washington Post or Baltimore Sun.
- State the purpose of the letter in the opening sentence and if you are referring to a bill, include the bill number, author and topic.
- If you live in the elected official's district be sure to say this in the opening paragraph as well.
- Focus on the message and key points.
- Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your family. Keep the letter brief – not more than one page.
- Restate your request at the end of the letter, for example urging them to support or oppose the bill.
- Thank the legislator for his or her support and offer to address any questions that he or she might have.
- Be sure to include your contact information, and sign the letter.

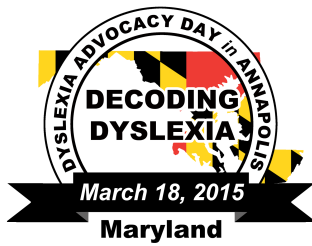
## EMAIL

The same guidelines apply to e-mail as to written letters. Before sending an e-mail, you might want to call the legislator's office and ask if a letter sent by e-mail is effective. If you do send an e-mail, send it to the representative. Do not copy other representatives or send a mass e-mail. Make it a brief message with no special layouts or graphics. Do not include attachments. Include your full name and address so it is clear that you are a constituent, and ask for a response. You might also want to send a hard copy of your e-mail to the legislator.

## PHONE CALL TO SUPPORT/OPPOSE LEGISLATION -- Find a phone number [HERE](#).

Once you click the link above, at the top right it says: Who Represents Me -- click that and find your representative. Once you know who represents you, click their name on the Legislators Tab. Their bio, room number, committee assignments and phone number will be listed.

If you choose to call your legislator, state your name and address and identify yourself as the legislator's constituent. You will often be speaking with a secretary or aide. Briefly make known your position as they keep track of the issues that people call about to report to the



legislator. Have your thoughts organized in advance, which will help you to keep the call brief and to the point. It is also very helpful to share how the issue affects you personally. Thank them for their support.

## LINKS

[Maryland Legislature](#)

[SB 5](#)

[HB 278](#)

[HB 763](#)

[Legislator Contact Information](#)

[Decoding Dyslexia Maryland Legislative Goals](#)