[Date]

The Honorable [INSERT First and Last Name]

[INSERT Elected Title]

[INSERT Address]

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 [INSERT Elected Official Title and Last Name],

On behalf of [INSERT organization], I would like to thank you for your continued unwavering support and commitment to serving people in crisis, including individuals in our state who will contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (988 Lifeline). [INSERT organization, who you are, and whom you represent] respectfully request [INSERT your ask here].

As one of the over 200+ crisis centers in the 988 Lifeline network, we provide free and confidential support available 24/7/365, connecting those experiencing mental health, substance use, or suicidal crises with trained crisis counselors. Local crisis centers are a vital component of the crisis care continuum that offers life-saving interventions and referrals to local resources to help individuals thrive in the community. 9-8-8 is a main entry point for callers in emotional distress to access services, as it represents the first point of contact individuals will have within the crisis continuum. [INSERT information unique to your crisis center and its role within the community.]

[OUTLINE your ask and supporting information. Feel free to include information from 988 Lifeline Talking Points.]

Thank you again for your commitment to serving individuals experiencing a mental health emergency. Please feel free to contact me at the [INSERT number/email] below if you have any questions or to discuss ensuring individuals in our great state of [INSERT state] have access to robust and well-resourced crisis intervention services.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

[INSERT First and Last Name]

[INSERT title]

[INSERT organization]

[INSERT contact information]

**[**[**Check here if you need information on locating your legislator**](https://www.votervoice.net/Vibrant/home)**]**

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

**Writing a letter to a legislator**

* Use the proper salutation, for example, The Honorable (first name) (last name) Address City, State, Zip code Dear (Assembly Member / Senator) (last name) Be courteous and informative in your communication. 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.
* State why you support or oppose the bill or other issue.
* Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your center, and your community.
* Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response.
* Be sure to include your name and address on both your letter and envelope.
* Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your center.
* 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.

**Sending e-mail communication to a legislator**

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 calls to a 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.