

**Five Easy Steps** you should do in every contact with your elected representatives

**Please share this e-mail with your membership and friends, family and organizations you have requested support from.**

A legislative staffer for a state representative, who is encouraged by the groundswell of opposition to the Governor's budget repair bill, has provided some advice for our members who are e-mailing legislators. The advice is offered to ensure that our member e-mails get opened and read. She suggested the following five easy steps you should do in every contact with your elected representatives:

1. Provide your full name - say it clearly and slowly if you're leaving a voicemail message and make sure your email includes your first and last name. You should always do this, and you should especially do this if your email address is something like [bunny310@gmail.com](mailto:bunny310@gmail.com) and gives no clue as to your real name.
2. Provide your full address and your phone number. Include your street, city, and zip. Though we enjoy hearing from and reading the views of citizens from around the state, we are most interested in responding to constituents. To confirm that you are a constituent, we need your full address. Again, if you're leaving a voicemail, say it clearly and slowly - staff writing down your information are not mind-readers, nor can we understand you when you speak at mach speed, nor are we likely to play your message three times to get it all down.
3. State your position clearly. Are you for or against Gov. Walker's bill? If you are emailing, put your position in the subject line of your email, i.e. "Oppose Gov. Walker's union busting bill." In a voicemail, state it early on in your message after your name and address.
4. Tell your story - are you a teacher? Are you a correctional officer? What will this bill mean for you and your family? Give some context to help the staffer or legislator understand the real impact of this bill on your life, your family, your colleagues, your work.
5. Do not e-SHOUT, yell or threaten. Keep in mind that the person listening to your voicemail, reading your email, or talking to you is likely a staff person, not the legislator. Putting your email in 44 point all-caps red font or menancingly threatening the legislator's re-election in your voicemail will not enhance your credibility.

*P.S. While it's fine to email all legislators and all staff, you really are just cluttering the inboxes of all of the state reps and state senators who don't represent you. They will very likely not respond to you and will just delete your message. Be more effective and more efficient: find out who actually represents YOU here: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx> and contact your state Representative, state Senator, and, of course, the Governor, who supposedly represents us all.*