



Tips for Writing Letters to Your Legislators

1. Remember proper format including date and appropriate titles:

Today's date

Representative First Name Last Name
P.O. Box 94062 (900 North 3rd Street)
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

or

Senator First Name Last Name
P.O. Box 94183
Baton Rouge, La 70804

EXAMPLE: Dear Senator or Representative (Insert Last Name):

2. The first paragraph should be a short introduction of who you are. Take this opportunity to describe your experiences as a teacher and your service in the classroom (i.e. I worked for x years in the East Baton Rouge School System or I taught first grade for x years at John Smith Elementary School in Baton Rouge).
3. The second paragraph should be a brief explanation of the issue on which you are writing. Name the bill and the Rep./Senator who authored it. Provide a brief explanation of the bill and specifically ask your legislator to oppose/support it.
4. The third paragraph (or section, if needed) should describe why your legislator should oppose/support the bill. Make sure to describe the impact the bill would have on you, current educators and/or future educators. This is an opportunity to share research Rodney and LRTA has provided you at district meetings or through the LRTA website or email blasts. Use this research to support your argument.
5. The concluding paragraph should thank them for their time and consideration on this issue.
6. Remember to be factual and direct. Limit your letter to one page.



Letter Writing Guide

***Please do not just fill in the blanks. Customize your letter with your experiences and tone of voice.**

Properly and respectfully address the legislator



Dear Representative/Senator _____

Includes personal information to make a connection with the legislator



My name is _____ and I am a retired educator from _____. I retired with _____ years of experience. (Add something personal about your educational experiences.)

Specifically asks the legislator to take action



I am writing to ask that you oppose HB 28 authored by Representative Barry Ivey. Even though this bill would only affect teachers hired after 2020, research shows states that shifted to hybrid plans from defined benefit plans failed to pay down the retirement debt and offered a lower benefit to educators statewide.

Louisiana has adopted retirement reform measures that are paying down the retirement debt, and at the same time, providing a modest benefit to its retirees.

Includes research to show why the legislator should take action



The National Institute on Retirement Security recently released a study evaluating six different state retirement systems. This study concluded that 81 percent of teachers in all six states received greater benefits through the lowest-tier pension compared to a realistic 401(k) style plan; similar to the one proposed in HB 28.

Add as much or as little research as you'd like. Try to include at least two facts.



The study also concluded that 65 percent of educators will teach at least 20 years, and experienced educators are linked to improved student achievement. Further, these educators will maintain long careers. Defined benefit plans are historically effective tools for attracting and retaining educators for the long term.

Finally, although this bill may help control for employer costs, there is not enough information to indicate the retirement benefit is greater than or even equal to our current defined benefit plan or Social Security.

Final reminder to take action before closing the letter



Please oppose HB 28. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Regards (or closing of your choice),