

# Letters to the Editor

## A few guidelines

- Always include your address and telephone number. An editor will call to verify that you wrote the letter.
- Be concise. A short, well organized letter has a greater chance of being selected than one that is long or that rambles. Magazines will often publish long letters but newspapers prefer letters of only a few paragraphs.
- State your position or concern in your first sentence. Then explain your reasoning. Don't overload your letter with details or examples. Choose two or three that validate your opinion.
- Don't be overly judgmental. Use adjectives and adverbs sparingly. Instead of "Repeal of the ObamaCare will be hugely catastrophic," explain why – "Repeal of ObamaCare will be catastrophic to the millions of Americans who cannot otherwise afford to buy health insurance."
- Avoid jargon. Use language that is easily understood by the readers.
- Spell out acronyms. Not everyone will recognize FISA or PennDot. After the first reference, use the acronym.
- Edit your first draft. Eliminate unnecessary words. For example, "It's come to my attention this week that ...."

Good luck. The "newshole," (*jargon alert*) that is to say, space on the opinion page, is limited. Few letters are chosen. If your letter isn't published, don't be discouraged. Try again.