SUCCESSFUL LETTER-WRITING TIPS and SAMPLE LETTER

To whom should I write?
Your letter will have the most impact with your own representative/senator (where you live/vote) and those for the town in which your library is located. Some towns are represented by more than one representative, and all will be receptive to the town’s issues. Find your legislators: [website link]

How can I make my letter stand out?
During the time the house and senate are in session, most state legislators are getting hundreds, if not thousands, of letters about hundreds of different bills and have a very short period of time in which to process all the information coming their way. Below are a few suggestions for writing a standout letter.

1. Do not send a form letter. Your own words will have more impact.
2. Include the bill number, brief description of the bill’s intent, and how you want the representative/senator to vote on the issue.
3. Tell briefly how this will impact you - a personal example/experience is best.
4. Offer to help (If you are interested in doing so).
5. Be sure to include your address and other contact info.
6. Send via email or US mail. For email, include the letter in the body of the email, not as an attachment.

Sample Letter
The following letter was prepared in response to HB 5614, An Act Concerning eBooks and Libraries – but you can adapt it for any issue. Be sure to include your own personal examples/experiences.

Dear Representative XYZ:

I am the Library Director at the Yourtown Public Library and I am writing to ask you to support HB 5614, a bill that will ensure that Connecticut libraries have the opportunity to purchase e-books that are offered for sale to the general public.

As the director of a public library in the state, I am concerned that the current practice of prohibiting the sale of popular e-books to public libraries by a number of publishers is denying my patrons equal access to information. Joe, a senior citizen of Yourtown and library user, finds e-books easier to read because he can enlarge the type size on his e-reader’s screen. Joe is on a fixed income and looks to our library for the books he wants to read. Unfortunately, I have to disappoint Joe on a regular basis - the library can’t provide the books he wants to read because the publishers will only sell to retail buyers, and Joe can’t afford to purchase the books himself. Please vote to stop this discriminatory practice and let me tell Joe the e-book he wants is available at the library.

Thank you. If I can provide any additional information, or help in any way, please feel free to contact me at [phone, email, etc.].

Sincerely,
Jane Doe, Library Director