

2014-2015

PDI's Professional Dietetics Legislative Letter Assignment

Objective: The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience in learning about a nutrition-related policy issue and in expressing your opinion about this issue to a legislator at the state or national level. This assignment is due on September 15th.

Assignment:

Part One: Become familiar with an issue

1. Find the names and addresses of the federal legislators for your home district and state (for both the House and Senate) by utilizing the website addresses discussed in lecture. Turn in the names and addresses of the legislators with your assignment (please make the address the legislator's office in Washington, DC). Your final letter should be addressed to one of the legislators in your home district.
2. Choose a policy issue from the ADA website to address in your letter. The issue should be one that interests you, one that you have knowledge about or one with which you have personal experience. To learn more about one of ADA's policy issues, go to the ADA website (eatright.org), click on "Advocacy and the Profession" (top bar), and go to "Priority Areas" (side bar). You may choose to learn about one of the seven issues that ADA has identified as a priority or another nutrition-related interest (Aging, Child Nutrition, Food & Food Safety, Health Literacy & Nutrition Advancement, Medical Nutrition Therapy & Medicare/Medicaid, Nutrition Monitoring and Research, Obesity/Overweight/Healthy Weight Management).
3. Write a brief summary of the issue, answering the following questions (should be approximately 1 page, 1.5 spaced):
 - a. Which ADA priority area (or other area) interests you?
 - b. What are some of ADA's objectives in addressing this issue
 - c. Why is it important to address this particular nutrition problem (can include professional and personal reasons)?
 - d. What makes *you* interested in this particular issue?
4. The names and mailing addresses of the House (1) legislator representing your home district, and the two Senators representing your home state – their Washington DC office address, please.

Part Two: The letter

1. Write a letter, addressed to one of your elected representatives (federal), on the issue you have chosen. You may advocate for passage of a particular piece of legislation, or voice your support for broader nutrition-related issues. Compose your letter, using the guidelines for letter-writing discussed in class. Use correct business letter format, addressing the letter to one of your legislators. Be sure the language is clear, concise, and that correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling are used. Keep letter under two pages (one page is fine).
 - a. Paragraph one – briefly introduce yourself and mention where you are from. Clearly state the specific issue you are writing about.
 - b. Paragraph two – give reasons why the issue is important using factual evidence, as well as personal anecdotes.
 - c. Paragraph three – specify the course of action that you would like the legislator to take and explain how this action would benefit his/her constituents.
 - d. End by thanking the legislator for his/her time and consideration of the issue and inviting them to contact you with questions or a request for additional information. Make sure your name, address, phone number and fax or e-mail address, if applicable, appear clearly on your letter.