

# How to Call Your Elected Officials



Calling is the one of the most effective ways to contact elected officials, as it demands their direct attention and listening. Elected officials track how many people call about each problem, which can influence their decision-making. So if one problem is getting a lot of calls, it may make them think more about that problem and how to vote on it.

## PREPARE BEFORE YOU CALL

Before calling, prepare a script focusing on personal experiences to highlight the problem's importance. Try to keep the call short to ensure your main point is understood.

The person you are talking to may ask if you are a constituent. This means that you live in the area that your elected official represents. Elected officials care the most about calls coming from the people in the community they represent. When calling, make sure you:

- Only call officials representing your area
- Identify yourself as a constituent and state your home address at the start of the call

The person you are talking to may ask if you want a response from your elected official. This typically means they write a letter explaining their stance on the issue. It is your choice whether you want this or not.

If there is a specific law that you would like to talk with your elected official about, it is also important to include the name of that policy or bill number in your message.

## Here is a sample of a good script for calling your elected official about a problem:

You: Hello, I would like to make a comment to [elected official's name] about [problem or policy].

Staff member: Yes please go ahead.

You: Thank you. My name is [your full name], and I live at [full address]. I'm calling to urge [elected official's name] to support laws that [fix the problem you are calling about - explain that here]. I care about this because [reason].

Staff member: I will give your message to [elected official's name]. Would you like for him/her to send a response to you?

You: [Yes OR No]. Thank you for your time, goodbye.

Staff Member: Thank you for your comments. Have a good day.

## Example:

Diego Jones is from Nowhere, Texas and lives in Farris County. In his neighborhood, swarms of angry chickens are showing up everywhere. They are attacking people and making people feel afraid to go outside. It is also costing people a lot of money to pay for health care for people hurt by the angry chickens.

As part of the Stop the Angry Chickens Community Group, Diego works to make elected officials aware of the chicken problem. Recently, a bill called the CHICKEN Act was introduced in the Farris County Commissioners Court. This bill would fund relocation of chickens away from Nowhere.

Diego plans to talk with his County Commissioner, Samantha Garcia, to request her support for the CHICKEN Act. Here is what Diego might say if he called County Commissioner Garcia's office on the phone:

Diego: Hello, I would like to make a comment to County Commissioner Samantha Garcia about the CHICKEN Act.

Garcia's staff member: Certainly. Please go ahead.

Diego: Thank you. My name is Diego Jones, and I live at 99 Happy Lane in Nowhere, TX. I'm calling to urge Commissioner Garcia to support the CHICKEN Act. I care about this because many members of my community have been attacked by chickens, and it is making us all afraid to go outside. The CHICKEN Act would give the chickens somewhere else to go so they would leave our county, and then we could all feel safe again.

Staff member: I will give your message to Representative Garcia. Would you like her to send a response to you?

Diego: Yes. Thank you for your time, goodbye.

Staff Member: Thank you for your comments. Have a good day.