

Getting it Right:

A people's guide to renegotiating NAFTA



Tips on writing a letter to the editor

A letter to the editor is a great way to get a message or information to a broader audience. Letters are read by community members, local politicians, decision makers and others and can be a great way to increase interest and support. Here are five quick tips you can use to help get your letter published:

- 1. Have a “hook.”** Is there something local happening on trade that you can mention in your letter, such as a NAFTA challenge against municipal or provincial governments, or a local business that does business in the U.S., or a recent news article that you can refer to? Newspapers are more likely to print letters that tie in with recent coverage or issues.
- 2. Keep it short.** Keep your writing concise and snappy and get to the point. Good letters always begin with a strong opening (use your hook!), followed by information, facts or arguments to support it, and then a conclusion. Check to see if the newspaper has any word count guidelines – 200 to 300 words is usually what you want to aim for. A letter that is too long will not be used.
- 3. Be factual.** If you are including facts about NAFTA or trade, try to include where they came from. This will increase the credibility of your letter.
- 4. Include your contact information.** Newspapers will always want to verify the authorship of letters. Be sure to include your phone number and email address when you send it in.
- 5. Try more than one paper.** There is nothing wrong with trying to get published in more than one newspaper. Just be sure to tailor your letter to the publication – change your hook or add some new information – to increase your chances.

Let us know if your letter gets published! We can keep track of letters, op-eds, and other media coverage to help other chapters and campaigners raise awareness and build momentum. Thank you for taking action!

Send us an email at inquiries@canadians.org, call us toll-free at 1-800-387-7177, or mail in a copy of your letter to: Council of Canadians, Atten.: NAFTA campaign, 300-251 Bank St., Ottawa, ON, K2P 1X3.

For more information about our campaigns visit canadians.org or call us toll-free at 1-800-387-7177.