Making Media Matter: Connecting Climate to Your Community
Hello!

This toolkit will guide you through writing a LTE to a local news outlet to raise awareness on the climate crisis.
KIDS SUING U.S. OVER CLIMATE CHANGE

IS THIS THE END?

U.S. PULLS OUT OF PARIS

U.S. COULD BE OUTLIER IN PLASTIC WASTE PACT

 JOHN BOLTON CALLING THE SHOTS

U.S. FAILS TO PAY UN ON TIME

KIDS SUING U.S. OVER CLIMATE CHANGE
But here’s the good news...
Today’s agenda

- Why the LTE should be apart of your advocacy toolbox.
- The necessary steps to making climate change personal.
- How you can maximize impact and generate change.
Setting the stage: making things personal

Youth climate strikes across the globe.
Setting the stage: *making things personal*
Why climate?

● And why NOW? Climate scientists are telling us that we need urgent & transformational change to avoid the worse impacts.

● We have a plan: the Paris Agreement.
The U.S. Climate Alliance

- Coalition of 25 governors committed to meeting the targets of the Paris Agreement.
- 55% of the population.
- $11.7 trillion in GDP.
- 40% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.
Let’s get **strategic**

- Local media has been used to generate policy change.
- Elected officials monitor their media mentions - it’s a good way to get attention.
- LTEs foster community awareness.
What exactly is an LTE?

- By definition: *Letter to the editor*.
- Easier lift than an op-ed or long-form article.
- Normally tied to a recently published piece or a “moment” i.e. Measles outbreak, new climate report.
- LTEs can inform or argue for or against a policy.
- Short and to the point.
The LTE process is easy

first
Choose an article or moment
Find something that is personal to you

second
Write
Keep it short and to the point!

third
Submit
Research your local paper’s submission guidelines.

last
Promote
If you get published, don’t forget to share it!
Focusing your LTE on U.S. climate action

Introduction

Recent headline and why climate action matters to you

Policy ask + argument

Your governor is NOT in the U.S. Climate Alliance
Why your governor should join!

Your governor is already in.
Ask your Members of Congress to support climate legislation.

How this connects to global action

Climate change is a global issue that needs global action = Paris Agreement
Tips and tricks

- Typically **150-200 words**, but no longer than 300.
- Keep your language **simple and concise**.
- **Identify yourself** - Include your name, address, email and phone number in case the editor needs to contact you.
- Don’t get discouraged if your letter isn’t published.
- Don’t rant.
You did it! Now what?

- Send it to your networks i.e. your local UNA-USA chapter, friends, family.
- Submit it via the UNA-USA LTE Notification form.
- Post it on your social media channels.
- Send it to your elected officials.
Letter: New Jersey must join U.S. Climate Alliance

Regarding the July 4 article “Who will pay most for climate change? South to be top loser,” all of the United States will lose due to climate change, including New Jersey.

The article references the 2017 study by Hsiang et al of the projected economic impact at the county level due to climate change, with counties in Southern states losing the most. For New Jersey, coastal damage will significantly impact the state’s GDP, and crime rates are projected to increase (fewer cold days that suppress crime). The other indices also show adverse impacts. For example, excessive heat will reduce crop yields in our agricultural counties.

Given the state’s economic, health and environmental vulnerabilities to climate change, and the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Accord, our state and municipal leaders must now fill the leadership void to address this global issue. To this end, our state legislators and governor should enact S3317/A5040, which would require New Jersey to join the U.S. Climate Alliance to uphold the Paris Climate Accord. This bill will ensure that New Jersey can prepare and lead in climate change mitigation efforts.

MORE: LETTER: Climate change deniers practicing willful, activist ignorance

Hopefully, all state leaders will recognize what 97 percent of climate scientists have been saying about our changing climate due to the burning of fossil fuels, and have the vision and courage to act in the best interests of the residents of our state, nation and world.

Mark Fukayama
Marlboro
Letter: Keep children safe with vaccines

By Veronica Lebedev, Vancouver
Published: February 16, 2019, 6:00 AM

As a young college student, I know that I am not an expert on every issue. There are sides to every story, with reasons that justify each side. The HB 1638 bill about vaccines will no doubt affect just about everyone. With the recent outbreak of measles, many have asked why vaccines are optional.

I do firmly believe that children should receive vaccines in order to prevent future medical issues and to protect the public. Only a small percentage of children have shown a negative reaction to common vaccines. That is not to disregard the children that had those reactions. But vaccines have helped us eliminate once-deadly diseases like smallpox, and others are following suite like polio, and malaria.

My little sister caught whooping cough during an outbreak a few years ago. My parents were behind on her vaccines because she was just a toddler and they didn’t want to give her all the vaccines at once. But after she got better, my parents vowed to never repeat the same mistake. The safety and lives of children are at risk.
Ready, Set, Go!

- Write your LTE.
- Submit to your local news outlet using their specifications and protocol.
- Submit your LTE to the UNA-USA national office using our [LTE Notification Form here](#).