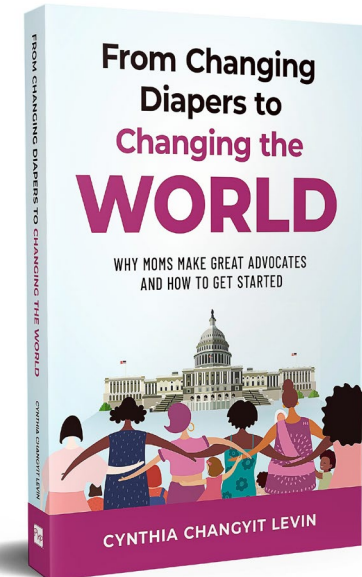


# Writing Letters to the Editor



**Cynthia Changyit Levin**  
(she/her)

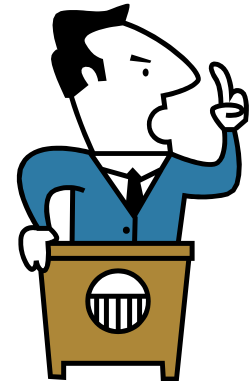
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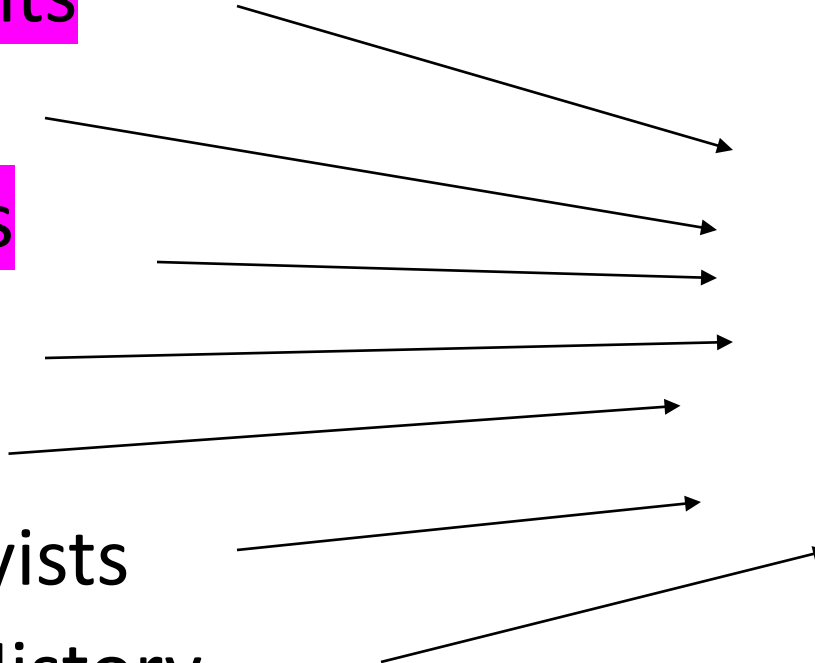
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# What Influences Congressional Decisions?

- Constituents
- Staff
- Colleagues
- Media
- Experts
- Paid Lobbyists
- Personal History

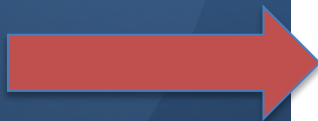


# Which ones can YOU influence?

- Constituents
  - Staff
  - Colleagues
  - Media
  - Experts
  - Paid Lobbyists
  - Personal History
- 

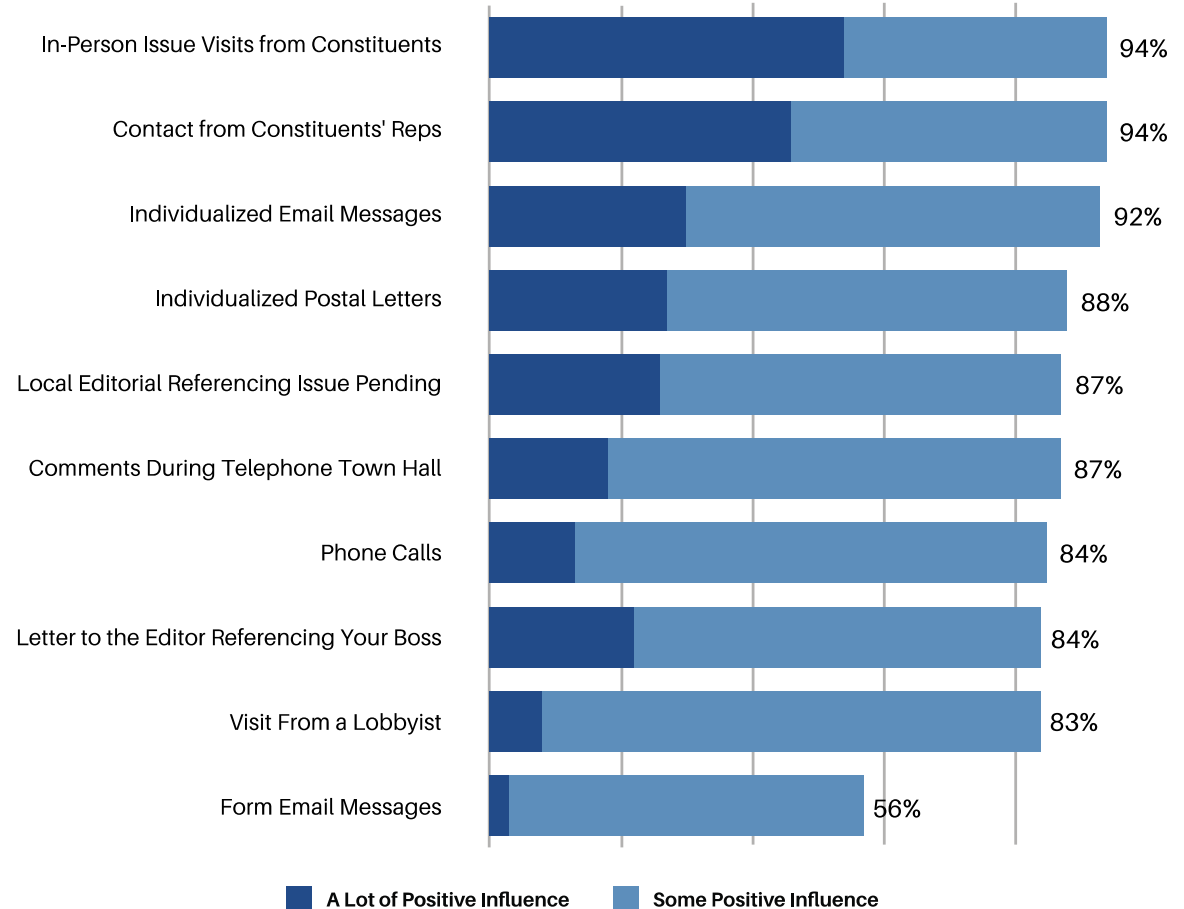
Today, we'll focus on MEDIA

# Which Actions Have Most Impact?



## Influence of Advocacy Strategies on Undecided Member of Congress

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the *Washington office* have on his/her decision?



(n = 190-192)

Source: 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.

Published in: *Citizen-Centric Advocacy: The Untapped Power of Constituent Engagement*, Congressional Management Foundation, 2017. <https://www.congressfoundation.org/citizen-centric-advocacy-2017>

# LTE Vs. Op-ed

What's the difference?

## **LTE**

- Short for “letter to the editor”
- 100-200 words
- Written by readers
- Usually 3-5 printed in every issue
- Not much space to develop argument

## **Op-ed**

- Short for “Opposite the Editorial Page”
- 500-700 words
- Written by community leaders, thought leaders, but sometimes readers as well
- Usually only a few printed per week
- More space to give examples & make your point
- Harder to get published

# Make your statements EPIC!

(method I learned from RESULTS)

- **ENGAGE** your audience
- Describe the **PROBLEM**
- **INFORM** about a solution
- **CALL** your audience to action

Can be used for many advocacy actions like op-eds, handwritten letters, town hall comments, & lobby meetings.

We will focus on letters to the editor

The logo for RESULTS is a red speech bubble with the word "results" written in white lowercase letters inside it.

results

# Write an EPIC laser talk

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**Engage:** Question, Thank You, startling statistic, personal story

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**Problem:** Clearly describe the problem as you see it. Can use some numbers/facts here.

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**Inform about solution:** Describe the program or legislation you think will help.

---

**Call to Action:** Ask a clear yes/no question asking them if they will do what you are asking.

Example:  
Childcare  
funding  
request  
from  
MomsRising

---

**Engage:** *When I was a new mom, I decided quit my job because I didn't find acceptable childcare. I don't want other women to feel pressured to make that decision.*

---

**Problem:** *MomsRising reports 16,000 childcare centers closed during the pandemic. A recent report shows that nearly ½ million families are estimated to be stranded without reliable childcare, exacerbating the nation's worker shortage.*

*Pre-pandemic, more than 1/2 of families already lived in childcare deserts without safe, nurturing, affordable options to begin with!*

---

**Inform about solution:** *The economic package currently being negotiated is the only viable opportunity to secure the funding required to support a strong, stable early learning system in America and lower costs for families at this critical moment.*

---

**Call to Action:** *Will you fight for working parents by ensuring that critical investments in comprehensive, high-quality childcare and Pre-K for families stay in the reconciliation package?*

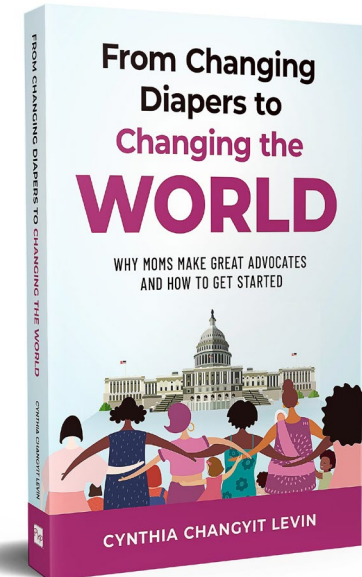


Got  
Published?

Get more  
impact!

- **Send** your LTE to your members of Congress by mail and email
- **Share** your LTE on social media and tag members of Congress
- **Invite** other activists to share it & also respond to your LTE by submitting their own
- **Report** it to your org, so they can use it in DC

# Questions?



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**Buy the book here!**

