

Phone Script

Hello, my name is ___(name)____. I live in ___(city/town/county)____, and I (am in the _____ grade) (teach _____(class)_____) at ___(school)____. I am calling to ask for your support of (bill number, if assigned), legislation to restore and protect student journalists' press freedom. As a (student journalist) (teacher), this would ensure that I can tell the stories that are important to my school and my community, while still allowing school officials the oversight they need to keep us safe and learning (or other reason - use your own words). I hope you will support this legislation, which is already the law in 14 states. I would love to meet with you further in your office or our newsroom here at school to talk about the work student journalists do and why this bill is so important to us. I can be reached by phone at _____ or e-mail at _____. Thank you for your time.

Writing Tips

Consider sending a handwritten letter instead of an email, but be sure your handwriting is legible and keep your comments limited to one page whenever possible.

Include your name, what city/town you are from, the grade you are in or the class you teach, and the name of your school.

If you have a bill number, include the line "I am writing to ask for your support of [bill number], the bill to restore and protect student journalists' press freedom. This may be the first your legislator has heard of the bill or the concept.

Mention how this impacts you, either because you have a story that has been censored or because you feel you cannot tell certain stories.

Mention that since the US Supreme Court's *Hazelwood* decision more than thirty years ago, administrators have had wide leeway to censor the work of student journalists, and resulting in the censorship of stories that do not disrupt the school environment but do include information critical for student life.

If you have work you're proud of, include a sample.

Thank them for their time and work serving your community.