

## **Planning for a discussion with MPs and Senators – and writing letters or emails.**

### **Useful tips:**

For every meeting request, or message an MP or Senator receives, they know that there are many other people in their community who feel the same way as you but just haven't had the time to do it (yet!)

By taking the time to plan and prepare for a meeting, and/or write a letter or email, you can clearly convey to your elected representative the issues that you are concerned about—and what actions you would like them to take, or what solutions you would like them to speak up for, to address this issue.

Writing a unique and compelling email or letter to an elected representative is a powerful advocacy tool. Being well prepared for a meeting or phone call is essential, as you need to keep the focus on the points you want to raise.

### **How to prepare for a meeting and/or structure your email or letter**

Your MPs and Senators get many requests for meetings, letters and emails each day, so make sure your message is well-structured and clear—so that your elected representative sits up and takes notice! It's important to remember that you need to convey your concerns and requests for actions in a way that is concise and does not require a lot of the politician's time.

First, briefly introduce yourself, including your name and where you live (so your elected representative knows you live in the area they are responsible for). You might like to also briefly say a little about your identity e.g. a young person, a person of faith, a local community group member, a teacher, a parent, a bushwalker.

Second, explain your concern—identify clearly the issue that you wish to address. Remember, MPs and Senators have to be informed about a lot of issues. So be clear on what you are talking about! Then explain why you are concerned about or interested in this issue. You should not assume that they know the background or detail.

Third, ask your elected representative to take action. Tell them clearly and respectfully what you would like them to do about the issue you have raised. This could be to support a particular policy, make representations to the relevant Minister on your behalf, speak to a colleague in power), or come to a local event to talk more with you and other concerned community members.

Lastly, thank them and sign off.

*(Adapted from Aust Conservation Foundation tips sheet )*

### **Contact details for MPs and senators**

- Find your local MP at [https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators\\_and\\_Members/Members](https://www.aph.gov.au/Senators_and_Members/Members)  
Send to your local MP if they are Labor, Greens or a progressive Independent.
- It is also worth sending to the federal Senators for your State who are Labor, Green or progressive independents. See email contacts here [Selected Federal Senators by state](#)