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May 8, 2005

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Domenici,

This letter gives you one example of the appropriate format for writing to a member of Congress. There are a variety of other letter styles that vary in some of the details. The important thing to remember is that, whether it is handwritten or typed, it should be a formal piece of correspondence.

You should always include your name and return address on the letter itself. (Letters sometimes get separated from envelopes.) You should also include the main subject you are writing about in the first paragraph of the letter. If you are writing about a particular bill or piece of legislation, include the bill number if you know it.

Be courteous and to the point, including key information or examples that support your point of view. Share your personal experience, research or special expertise if you have any. Personal letters have much more impact than form letters.

Like it or not, how your letter looks creates a first impression – good or bad. A well written letter with clearly stated arguments, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation gives you a better chance at being listened to.

Most members of Congress believe the mail is one of the best ways to understand what is important to the people they represent. It is a very good way to participate in our self-governing republic.

Sincerely,

John Q. Scout