



**results**

**Making Influential Noise Through the Media**  
**Sept. 2, 2020**

# Objectives



1. Review why media matters
2. Learn about the nuts and bolts of writing and submitting a letter to the editor
3. Spend some time writing our letters, preparing them for submission
4. Learn how to make the most of media once published

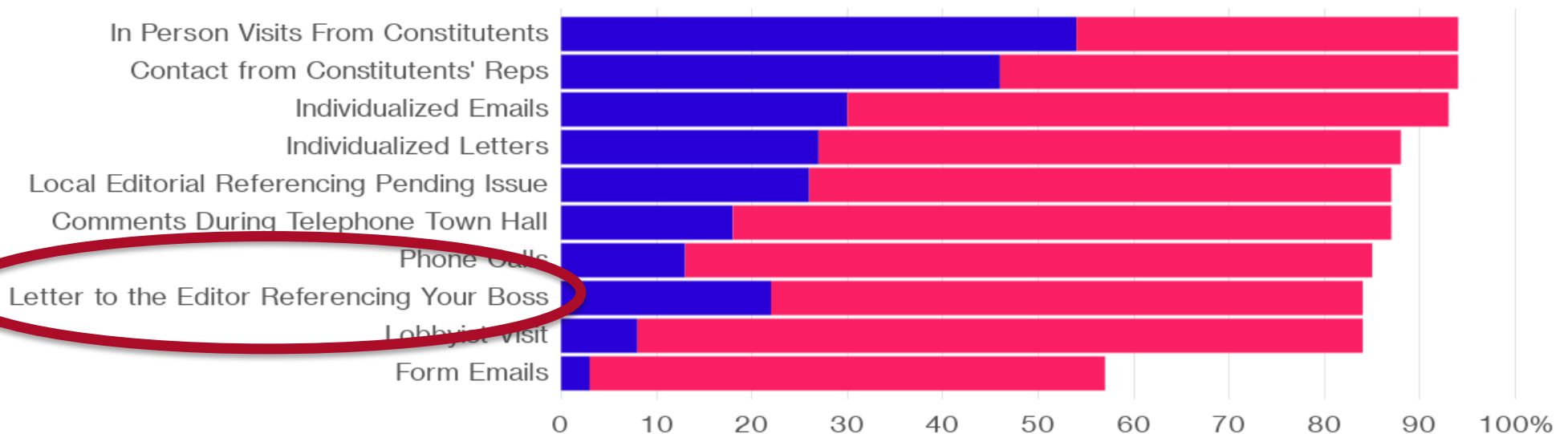
# Advocacy Works!

results

## Want To Be Heard? Show Up!

Influence on Washington D.C.-based congressional staffers by communication type.

■ A Lot of Positive Influence   ■ Some Positive Influence



Source: Congressional Management Foundation

\*Bars do not add up to 100 because not all surveyed categories are displayed

Bloomberg 



Local Media is still  
the best way to  
get information  
and opinions  
about the  
community one  
lives in



# Why Work with the Media?



- **Powerful tool**
  - Editorial page most read section in the paper
  - Best source of local information and opinions
- **Strong media work can move decision-makers** to alter their behavior, positions, and perceptions on an issue
  - Asheville Citizen-Times Circulation: 26,347 daily; 36,208 Sunday
- **Educates the public**
  - Builds political will
  - Reaches wide audience
  - Engages new people

# Secret to Getting Published (Shhhhhh...)



1. Write
2. Submit
3. Repeat

	News	Editorials	Letters to the Editor	Op-Eds
Who writes it?	Them	Them	Us	Us
What's it say?	Facts	Facts & Opinion	Facts & Opinion	Facts & Opinion

# Opinion Media Madlibs

results

\_\_\_\_\_ should \_\_\_\_\_.  
(person) (action)



# What is a Letter to the Editor?



It's a contribution to a new or on-going community conversation



~~Noble~~  
~~Worthy~~  
~~Consistent~~



- ✓ New angle
- ✓ Unusual
- ✓ Local
- ✓ Personal
- ✓ Important

# The Des Moines Register, October 9, 2012

results

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Dear Editor,

Mitt Romney wants to cut  
PBS Kids. But I won't stand  
for it. He probably thinks that  
becuse little kids watch it  
they won't care. But PBS helped  
me learn to read. I do  
better in School becuse of  
PBS kids. PBS is not just  
TV to me.

From Stella K Linn, age 7  
W. Des Moines, IA 50265

**Oath Keepers honor  
oaths to Constitution**

Recently the Oath Keepers  
organization has come under  
attack as being not only radical

reach, teach and inspire all of us  
to step back and think about  
what that oath actually means.  
Those of us who have taken this  
oath have not only a moral obli-  
gation, but a legal obligation to

to me.

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### **Cornyn, Senate should pass a relief package**

Re: Aug. 16 article, "Americans waiting on help, but Congress is in recess."

I am appalled that the Senate recessed for three weeks without passing emergency legislation to address the pandemic and economic crisis. Sen. John Cornyn shows he is a leader by standing behind Sen. Mitch McConnell on TV. How about he and his colleagues take action to deal with the emergency America faces?

Sen. Cornyn and the Senate need to go back to work and pass a COVID-19 package that provides \$100 billion emergency rental assistance to avert the catastrophe of 20 million Americans evicted. What about the more than 25 million workers who got their last \$600 supplement with their unemployment check at the end of July? And, according to experts, they need to provide \$20 billion to keep the wheels from falling off international humanitarian health work.

This is a real crisis for real Americans. We need real leaders who will take real action right now.

**Mark Coats, Austin**

### **Cornyn: I'll keep fighting for more pandemic relief**

Re: Aug. 18 letter to the editor, "Cornyn, Senate should pass a relief package."

In his Aug. 18 letter, a writer expressed his desire for Congress to do more to help Texans suffering from the economic consequences of the pandemic. We've passed five coronavirus relief packages so far, and I share his frustration that we're stalled on a sixth.

To date, Congress has passed trillions of dollars in coronavirus relief, including \$312 billion in public health funding and \$28 billion for COVID-19 testing. We've sent recovery checks of up to \$1,200 per individual, boosted unemployment benefits with an additional \$600 per week, and appropriated more than \$25 billion to help Americans suffering from food insecurity.

Still, we need to do more for Texans who are out of a job through no fault of their own. I support an extension of enhanced federal unemployment benefits, another round of recovery checks, and more funding for schools and child-care. I'll keep fighting to deliver that for Texans.

**John Cornyn,  
U.S. Senator, Austin**

**results**

# **Influence of Letters to the Editor**

# Letters to the Editor

The logo for 'results' is a red speech bubble with the word 'results' in white lowercase letters.

- 150 – 200 words (check paper's website)
- 3 key pieces:
  - a) Local or timely hook (best to respond to a story)
  - b) Why it matters
  - c) Call to action

# EPIC Format for Writing & Speaking

The logo consists of a red speech bubble shape pointing to the right, containing the word "results" in white lowercase letters.

**ENGAGE**: Something to capture their attention

Local, Timely  
Hook

**PROBLEM**: Outline the problem, paint a picture to help them understand

**INFORM ON SOLUTION**: Explain how your solution will confront the problem

Why it  
Matters

**CALL TO ACTION**: Yes or no request

Call to  
Action

# Letters to the Editor

## Structure



### How it appears

1. Local & timely hook
2. Why it matters
3. Call to action

### How you write it

1. Call to action
2. Why it matters
3. Local & timely hook



## Three Parts of a LTE: Housing

**results**

Ditch the power struggles and help working people. Re: Aug. 16 article, "Americans waiting on help, but Congress is in recess." I am amazed at the hard-heartedness of our federal government. Elected officials in Washington are worrying about spending too much when people have lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

How do they think our economy will recover and tax dollars be collected if people are homeless and buried in debt? How will people return to work when companies are going out of business? How will landlords pay their mortgages and taxes when renters can't pay their rent?

Congress needs to put aside their power struggles and find solutions benefiting the people in this country. Pass a bill providing \$100 billion in rent relief. Pass a bill assisting small businesses to stay solvent. Pass a bill to stop evictions. The hard-working people that kept our economy humming until the pandemic arrived deserve this respect.

*Eloise Sutherland, Austin*

## Three Parts of a LTE: Global

results

Break the stalemate in Congress: A global pandemic requires a global response. Congress and the White House are indifferent to the world's cry for relief. The U.S. must support low-income countries to deal with the immediate crisis and to strengthen healthcare systems. About 80 percent of tuberculosis, HIV and malaria programs worldwide have reported disruptions in services.

Public health experts warn the coronavirus is likely to set back years of painstaking progress against TB, HIV and malaria. Many kids are already missing out on life-saving vaccines. Food insecurity and starvation are also rising fast in Africa and Asia due to severe lockdowns. Whether it's COVID-19 or other ongoing global health emergencies, we need a strong response from Congress here and around the world.

I'm counting on Congress and the White House to break the current stalemate and pass an emergency response package that includes no less than \$20 billion for international development, including \$4 billion for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, \$4 billion for GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance and \$2 billion for anti-hunger relief. We must act now.

*Pat Payne, Castro Valley*

# Letters to the Editor

## Structure



### How it appears

1. Local & timely hook
2. Why it matters
3. Call to action

### How you write it

- 1. CALL TO ACTION**
2. Why it matters
3. Local & timely hook

# Call to Action: **RESULTS Will Provide**

Action Alerts, Monthly Action Sheets



## **Global Poverty**

I call on Congress to break the stalemate in DC and pass an emergency response package that addresses the urgent needs of Americans and includes no less than \$20 billion for international development and global health.

## **US Poverty**

It's time for Congress and President Trump to resume negotiations now and enact a COVID-19 deal that includes \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance and a national moratorium on evictions.

# Call to Action: **RESULTS Will Provide**

Action Alerts, Monthly Action Sheets



## **Combined**

I call on my Representative and Senators to break the stalemate in DC and pass an emergency response package that includes \$100 billion rental assistance and an eviction moratorium for Americans, and no less than \$20 billion for international development and global health.

## Call to Action

**results**

# CASTRO VALLEY FORUM

A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

YEAR 32

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020

NO. 35

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—*Pat Payne, Castro Valley*  
August 26, 2020

## Call to Action

results

# Statesman

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Eloise Sutherland, Austin  
August 21, 2020

# Letters to the Editor

## Structure



### How it appears

1. Local & timely hook
2. Why it matters
3. Call to action

### How you write it

1. Call to action
- 2. WHY IT MATTERS**
3. Local & timely hook



## Why it matters



Why do I care about this issue?

What makes this issue compelling now?

Why does my member of Congress  
need to know about it?

## Why it Matters

results

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## Why it Matters

results

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1. Local & timely hook
2. Why it matters
3. Call to action

### How you write it

1. Call to action
2. Why it matters
- 3. LOCAL & TIMELY  
HOOK**



## Local and Timely Hook

results

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A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SERVING CASTRO VALLEY SINCE 1989

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020

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results

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Eloise Sutherland, Austin  
August 21, 2020

SERVING ASHEVILLE SINCE 1870  
**CITIZEN TIMES**  
 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 [CITIZEN-TIMES.COM](http://CITIZEN-TIMES.COM)

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"... These kids won't be getting an education until you go back to school. And before COVID, we already had an education gap."  
*J'Tanya Adams, former regional director of EveryoneOn, a nonprofit that works to close the digital divide in the city*



Ty'neese Johnson, a freshman at Myers Park, is one of the many children across North Carolina that lacks access to the Internet in their home. PHOTOS BY JESSICA ROSKELLMAN/AROUNA NEWS COLLABORATIVE

## DIGITAL DIVIDE

Lack of access to high-speed internet plagues urban areas during pandemic

Devina Bose *The Charlotte Observer*

**Y**olanda Ames and her boys live in a crowded apartment on a dead end street in East Charlotte's Grier Heights. • Wires that could bring the world — and her boys' classrooms — into her home zigzag between poles across her neighborhood. • But that world comes at too steep a cost for Ames. On a muggy afternoon this month, she had about \$25 in her bank account, a vague notion of what she could make for dinner and an overdue light bill. • "It's just hard, and I can't get help," she said.



Ames is the head of one of 45,000 households in Charlotte without a subscription to broadband internet. Unlike rural swaths of the state, the city is rich in infrastructure and competition from service providers. Across North Carolina, about 20% of homes have no internet subscription, but in neighborhoods like Ames', that number is more than doubled. Here, where the majority of residents are people of color who live in poverty, an Internet subscription has been a luxury, not a necessity.

The pandemic brought this internet divide into stark focus. Schools rushed to migrate learning from classrooms to living rooms with little control over how some students would keep up. They doled out iPads and laptops and devices that could provide some data through cellular services. For families like Ames', it isn't enough.

**About the story**  
 This report is brought to you by The North Carolina News Collaborative, a coalition of 22 newspapers across the state. This occasional series, Bouncing Back: North Carolina's Economic Journey to Recovery, is made possible through a grant from The Pulitzer Center.

See [DIVIDE](#), Page 6A.

## Local Timely Hook

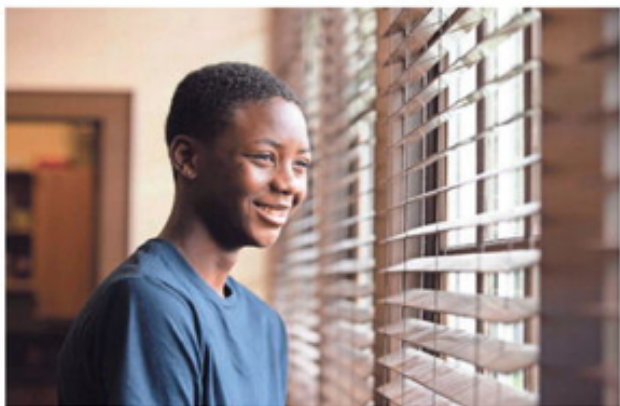
results

“Thanks for your piece on the digital divide (DIGITAL DIVIDE, Sept. 1, 2020). Once again, the poorest among us are disadvantaged in ways that affect their entire lives. Some studies project that students lacking adequate internet access during COVID will never catch up in their education. We are seeing the same kind of divide everyday when it comes to food and housing. COVID has made it worse in NC.”



"... These kids won't be getting an education until you go back to school. And before COVID, we already had an education gap."

*J'Tanya Adams, former regional director of EveryoneOn, a nonprofit that works to close the digital divide in the city*



Ty'nease Johnson, a freshman at Myers Park, is one of the many children across North Carolina that lacks access to the Internet in their home. PHOTO BY JESSICA ROSKELNICK/AROUNDNEWS COLLABORATIVE

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For families like Ames', it isn't enough.

See [DIVIDE](#), Page 6A.



Yolanda Ames stands outside her Grier Heights apartment in Charlotte on Aug. 5. Ames, who can't afford the internet, is among half of households in her neighborhood with no internet subscription.

### About the story

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## Rest of the Letter

results

Another massive divide we must not forget, is the global divide. In many low-income countries the pandemic is undermining decades of progress in fighting disease. Millions of children are missing out on life-saving vaccines and food insecurity and starvation are rising fast. Organizations like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance are out of emergency funds and the stakes are great.

I call on our Representative and Senators to break the stalemate in DC and pass an emergency response package that includes \$100 billion rental assistance and an eviction moratorium for Americans, and no less than \$20 billion for international development and global health needs. The bill should also address the digital divide for American students who need it. **It's time to get back to the people's work.**



## Local and Timely Hook



“Thanks for keeping us up to date on COVID-19 in Buncombe County (Death total up 6 over last week, Sept. 1, 2020). We must keep this pandemic in front of if we want to get in front of it. Regular reporting keeps us vigilant.”



## Rest of the Letter

results

I wish Congress was more vigilant about their response to COVID-19 as well—they left DC for a long recess without passing an emergency COVID spending bill, leaving millions of people in danger of eviction in the U.S. or death globally. **In many low-income countries the pandemic is undermining decades of progress in fighting disease. Millions of children are missing out on life-saving vaccines and food insecurity and starvation are rising fast. Global organizations like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance are out of emergency funds and the stakes are great.**

**I call on our Representative and Senators to break the stalemate in DC and pass an emergency response package that includes \$100 billion rental assistance and an eviction moratorium for Americans, and no less than \$20 billion for international development and global health needs. It's time to get back to the people's work.**

# Local, Timely Hook



It brings hope to read about how our community has come together to address the coronavirus outbreak (cite article). And just as we are struggling here, we must also remember the challenges face by nations with fewer resources.

## Local and timely hook

The logo consists of a red speech bubble shape pointing downwards, containing the word "results" in white lowercase letters.

Coronavirus

2020 election coverage

Local election

Candidate profiles

Poverty and homelessness

Back to school

Recession

Gridlock in DC

Public health

Local or national budget cuts

Education

Student housing

New stadium spending

Tax issue

Pop culture

Charity drives

## Short Letters Work Too

The logo consists of the word "results" in white lowercase letters inside a red speech bubble shape.

**1: Hook)** As Congress prepares for the next stage of the coronavirus response, it should include support for poverty-stricken countries so that they can deal with the immediate crisis and strengthen their health care systems in the long run.

**3: Call to Action)** I call on Sens. Bob Casey, D-Pa., and Pat Toomey, R-Pa., to give their support to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. **2: Why it Matters)** This is a global pandemic, and it requires a global response. This is a good place to start.

**LILY CALLAWAY**

Lawrenceville, PA

April 20, 2020



results





## **Get a draft letter to start your LTE on the RESULTS Website**

- **Action Alerts**
- **Monthly Actions**





**100 percent of letters not sent never get published!**

Submitting your LTE:

- E-mail it directly to the paper (e.g. [letters@kcstar.com](mailto:letters@kcstar.com) - look on paper's website for address)
- Submit it through your paper's website (usually an online form)
- Submit it through the RESULTS website (<https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/>)
- Mailing a hard copy to your local paper (takes longer)

**Important!** Most papers require you to include your name and contact info to be published. If you are a new writer, they will sometimes contact you to verify authorship.



RESULTS Website = Very Easy



Direct to the Paper = Pretty Easy

## Media Success Checklist



- ✓ Find a hook
- ✓ Edit the template
- ✓ Check your word count
- ✓ Check for 3 key pieces
- ✓ Hit “send”!
- ✓ Send it to Congress
- ✓ Send it to RESULTS
- ✓ Repeat

# Share your skills with others



- Getting published is **empowering and fun**
  - Fast and visible
- Media actions a great way to **get people interested in advocacy**
- **Invite others** to write letters with you
  - Call a friend and ask him/her to write an LTE (support)
  - Collaborate on writing an op-ed
  - Hold an online training (use this PPT – it's easy!)
  - Make it a game – who can get published first?
- **Always follow up** after to celebrate success/try again

# Persistence and Patience

results

- Keep at it!
- If one paper doesn't publish, try another
- If you get rejected multiple times, contact the editor and ask what they look for in letters
- Work at building relationships with editorial staff and reporters
- **Send all you published media to your legislators**



## Next Steps



1. **Send in a letter to the editor** on housing and/or global health
  - Find online actions at: <https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/>
  - Let us know when you get published at [www.tinyurl.com/RESULTSMedia](http://www.tinyurl.com/RESULTSMedia)
2. **Send published letters to key aides and deliver them in lobby meeting**
3. **Invite others** you know to share your letter and write their own letters too
4. If you are an LTE pro, **consider an op-ed or editorial**
  - Contact Jos Linn or Ken Patterson for help

## Resources



- **RESULTS Media Tools:** <https://results.org/volunteers/media-tools/>
- **RESULTS Online Media Actions:** <https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/>
- **RESULTS Media Report Form:** [www.tinyurl.com/RESULTSMedia](http://www.tinyurl.com/RESULTSMedia)
- **RESULTS Advocacy Basics:** <https://results.org/volunteers/advocacy-basics/>
- **Staff Media Support:** Jos Linn, [jlinn@results.org](mailto:jlinn@results.org)
- **RESULTS Training Resources:** <https://results.org/volunteers/training-webinars/>





**results**



**@RESULTS\_Tweets**



**/RESULTSEdFund**



**@voices4results**

**[www.results.org](http://www.results.org)**