

MEDIA TIP

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN LTE AND OP-ED

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

OPINION EDITORIAL

THE DIFFERENCE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shorter—about 250 words• Published faster• Best at quickly countering misinformation or highlighting coming events• Send without permission | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longer—500 plus words• Longer lead time• Showcases author credibility• Generally discuss with paper before sending |
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WHEN YOU SHOULD WRITE ONE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your issue has JUST been in the news. The sooner you write, the more likely you are to be published!• A vote or action is coming up• You want to counter claims of your opponents, an unbalanced story or, unfavorable editorial• You want to emphasize a point made in an article | <p>To make a case when first introducing a proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make lengthier or more complex points• When the author has “standing,” such as a known expert or local hero• When a paper chooses not to run an editorial or runs a negative editorial |
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WHAT YOU SHOULD WRITE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write from the heart, with passion• Be colorful -- cite personal experience• Don't assume people have read a past article you're responding to• Don't attack the paper or reporter• Close with a question or call to action | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A lively, colorful opening is a must!• Tie to local issues• Make 2-3 key points• Provide “expert” viewpoint• Close with a call to action |
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DON'T FORGET

- Send a copy of your letter/op-ed to lawmakers and officials
- When you're published, circulate a clipping to elected officials and supporters