

Contacting your Representative...Does it Really Matter?

How many times a week do you get an action alert in your email—call your representative about this or that issue? Send a letter to your congressperson, phone the mayor's office, contact the governor. And it seems like a lot of work, just another chore to do—for what result? Does it really do any good? Does my phone call, e-mail, or letter really make a difference?

The short answer: YES.

Here's a headline from CNN: *"Wyoming senator rethinking gun legislation after constituents flood her office with calls urging action."*

Cyndi Lummis, Senator from Wyoming, got so many calls from constituents that she couldn't ignore them. Every single lawmaker needs voters in order to keep their jobs. Just a few dozen people weighing in on an issue can tip the scales. And the effect is even more powerful when you contact local legislators and agencies. I worked in state government for many years, and I saw again and again how even a single letter or phone call could stir up interest in an issue and really make a difference.

What works best? The more direct a communication, the more effective it is. In-person office visits or town halls are the most powerful. Phone calls are next. Then emails.

One call, one letter won't always change the world. But your action can be the catalyst for many others. Use the power of social media, letters to the editor, and just talking to friends, kids, grandchildren, to spread the word about how you've raised your voice on an issue that's dear to your heart. Others may say, "Hey, I could do that, too."