

Write an op-ed or letter to the editor.

Help your community understand why business and professional events matter.

Local media can be a powerful way to explain how policy decisions affect businesses, workers, and events in your community.

Letter to the editor or op-ed?

Letter to the editor

Best when:

- responding to an article or editorial;
- reacting quickly to a current issue;
- making one concise point.

Typical target: **about 200–250 words**, although publication requirements vary.

Op-ed

Best when:

- explaining an issue in greater depth;
- sharing your professional perspective;
- connecting a national policy debate to your community or industry.

Typical target: **about 500–800 words**, although publication requirements vary.

The ECA formula

Here is a five-part framework for creating a great op-ed or letter to the editor.

1. START WITH THE MOMENT

Why are you writing **now**?

- A new policy?
- A vote in Congress?
- A local event?
- A recent news story?

2. MAKE IT LOCAL

Tell readers why someone in their community should care.

“Next month, thousands of people will arrive in our city for...”

is much stronger than:

“The business events industry is important to the economy.”

3. TELL A STORY

Explain what you have personally seen.

- How did a tariff change affect an exhibitor?
- Did a visa delay keep someone from attending?
- What does a local convention mean to workers or small businesses?

4. ADD JUST ENOUGH DATA

Use one or two strong data points to put the story in context.

Do not turn the piece into a policy memo.

5. END CLEARLY

Readers should know the idea you want them to remember.

Sample op-ed outline

Headline

A short statement of the argument.

Paragraph 1: The hook

A timely event, story, or surprising fact.

Paragraphs 2–3: Why this matters locally

Your organization, community, or experience.

Paragraphs 4–5: The bigger policy issue

Explain it without jargon.

Paragraph 6: The path forward

What should policymakers understand or consider?

Closing

Return to your opening and leave readers with one memorable idea.

Sample pitch email

Subject: Op-ed submission: [SHORT HEADLINE]

Dear [EDITOR NAME],

I'm [NAME/TITLE] with [ORGANIZATION] in [COMMUNITY]. I'd like to submit the attached op-ed about [ISSUE] and how it is affecting [LOCAL BUSINESSES/EVENTS/COMMUNITY].

The piece is approximately [XXX] words and has not been submitted elsewhere. Thank you for your consideration. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Best regards,
[NAME]

Before you hit send

- ☐ Check the publication's submission rules.
- ☐ Stay within its word limit.
- ☐ Avoid jargon and unexplained acronyms.
- ☐ Use accurate, current statistics.
- ☐ Make the piece local and personal.
- ☐ Have someone proofread it.
- ☐ Include your contact information and short bio.
- ☐ Follow the outlet's exclusivity rules.

Want to write an op-ed or letter to the editor after election day?

ECA's Op-Ed Program can help you make an impact throughout the year.