

Short Guide to Writing Letters to the Editor



1. Keep them short. That means under 200 words.
2. Make one point only, or two at the very most.
3. Do not use screaming words or exclamation points!!! Keep the tone measured.
4. Submit the letter within 24 hours of the offending article (or the article you want to commend).
5. Cite the article by title and date in your first paragraph.
6. Give your name, address, and phone number.
7. Make sure you are submitting it to the right person: The Letters to the Editor Page Editor (or the Opinions editor, or the editor in chief). Most websites will give you the right address.
8. Send an email within 48 hours to ask, politely, whether they are going to run it.
9. Most papers have a once a month rule on letter writers, so obey it.
10. Read your letter out loud before you send it in.

Sample Letter to the Editor

The Flaw in Marsy's Law

While I sympathize with Keaira Stine and the horror of sexual abuse that she survived, I disagree with her claim that Marsy's Law would not infringe upon the rights of the accused ("Marsy's Law will make a difference for victims," Nov. 22).

Unfortunately, one part of Marsy's Law would indeed violate the U.S. Constitution.

The poisonous item says that a victim has the right "to refuse an interview, deposition, or other discovery request made by the accused or any person acting on behalf of the accused."

This would be a facial violation of the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states: "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right ... to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor..."

If a defendant and the defendant's attorney cannot confront their accuser, then this fundamental right of the accused goes right out the window, and the defendant cannot get a fair trial.

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