

How to Write a Letter And Influence Officials

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL, Assemblyman, 45th District

Each year since I was first elected in 1950, I have written a column on how to influence legislation by writing letters to your elected representatives. Although I know more about the effect of letters on members of the California Legislature, almost all my suggestions apply to letters written to your city councilman, your school board, your county supervisor, your own member of the U. S. House of Representatives, and the two U. S. Senators from California.

The following recommendations may help you to help yourself to get the kind of government you want. None of them are mandatory. All are intended to be constructive and friendly.

1. **FIRST**, decide whether your problem is one affecting your city, your county, the State of California, the U.S. government, or your school board. Then write to the appropriate elected official.

For example, if you write to me about trash collection, I must send your letter to your city government. Also, if you want your son appointed to the U.S. Military Academy, the U.S. Naval Academy, or the U.S. Air Force Academy, obviously you should write to your own Congressman and also write to the two U.S. Senators from California.

One of them may give your boy an opportunity to qualify for entrance into one of the service academies.

2. **USE THE** correct name and address. When the Legislature is not in session, please write to me at P.O. Box 327, Redondo Beach, Calif. When the Legislature convenes in 1964, write to me at Room 4001 Assembly Chambers, State Capitol, Sacramento 14, Calif.

3. Be sure that you write to your own elected representative from your own district. I receive mail from all over California. Obviously, mail from the 46th Assembly District receives priority and the rest is answered when I have time. The only exception is mail from the authorized officer of

some trade or professional association.

4. **WHEN THE** State Legislature is in session in Sacramento, a letter regarding a bill which you like or dislike should refer to the number of the bill, the name of the principal author, and the subject. If you do not know the name of the author, or the bill number, a brief summary of what you think the bill does is essential. When the State Legislature is not in session, we have Interim Committees which hold hearings on numerous sub-

jects. Some hearings are on bills not enacted into law at the last previous session and some are on general subjects but not necessarily any specific bill.

5. You will receive faster and better service if you can write a separate letter on each subject or bill. The reason is that each bill or subject is placed in a separate file folder. If you refer to several entirely different bills or subjects in one letter, the secretary and I must, of necessity, take more time to answer your letter.

6. **ALL POSTAL** cards and letters are read and answered, whether written with a pencil, pen or typewriter, but you will receive faster and better service if you type your letter and enclose one carbon copy. The original may be sent to the Department of Bureau head for comment and the copy is retained on file so that your request or suggestion can be kept on the active list until your problem is adequately studied and your letter answered. Telegrams are not answered unless you give your full name

and address in the telegram. The reason is that a telegram without an address requires searching telephone books for the address, often without success.

7. Form letters or material lifted from some publication are not as effective as a letter written in your own words, telling briefly why you support or oppose a particular bill or subject.

8. A **SHORT**, clear, concise letter without threats or promises is more effective than a

flowery letter of flattery or one with threats.

9. Be sure to give your complete address and telephone number in the letter, not merely on the envelope.

10. Tell how a particular bill or subject affects you, your family, your business, or your community. This demonstrates that you know the facts.

11. While the Legislature is in session, please write before a bill is enacted into law. This is a matter of simple timing.

12. **WRITING THE** same let-

ter to anyone except your own elected representative from your own district generally is a waste of time. For example, during the recent 1963 general session, I received more than 3,000 letters from all over California supporting my two anti-obscenity bills. Each letter writer received a letter from me giving him or her the name and address of his or her own member of the Assembly and his or her own State Senator, but most of the 3,099 wrote back to me that they had full confidence that if I showed their letters to the other legis-

lators the bills would pass. Both bills were killed in the Assembly Judiciary Committee.

13. It is impossible to please all the people all the time. If you do not get exactly the results you want from one letter, do not abandon hope. Try again on another bill or issue. You may win!

14. Finally, your city council, your school board, and your county supervisors are very important. Please do not expect the Legislature of the National Congress to do a job which can and should be done locally.

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CalProp to Open New 'Americana'

Formal opening of the new 86-unit "Americana" apartment was announced this week by developer Victor Zaccagnin, president of CalProp Investments, Inc.

The two-story structure, located at 3635 Artesia Blvd., is adjacent to the recently opened Il Pompeii apartment which was cited for architectural beauty by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce.

"The Americana" features contemporary American architecture and was built at a cost of \$750,000. Completely furnished one-bedroom and single units are available, each decorated in a contemporary theme. Kitchens feature built-ins.

A COMPLETE program of recreational activities has been planned. Facilities include a large heated pool, a separate recreation building, a sun deck, and three-shaded patios. In addition, residents will enjoy the use of the barbecue areas and a large putting green.

Mr. and Mrs. Bob McIntyre will manage the "Americana" for CalProp Investments.

CalProp is a publicly-owned firm engaged in the acquisition of property for the development of garden-type apartment buildings throughout Los Angeles County. Home offices are now located at 999 N. Sepulveda Blvd., in the Airport-Imperial Building.

Slates Meeting

The Diabetes Association of Southern California will conduct a meeting for diabetic children and their families today at the Houghton Park Clubhouse 2, Atlantic Avenue and Artesia Boulevard, North Long Beach.

... Mail Box

(Continued from Page 4) papers, radio and television stations to be sure and use the name of Carson whenever something happens here in our own community.

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15-oz. Hourglass 6:1.00	2-oz. Sherry 3:1.00	3 1/2-oz. Champagne 3:1.00	6-oz. Highball 8:1.00	8 1/2-oz. Old Fashion 8:1.00	2-oz. Brandy 3:1.00	10 1/2-oz. Goblet 3:1.00
1-oz. Cordial 3:1.00	6-oz. Juice 8:1.00	1 1/2-oz. Jigger 10c	8-oz. Sherbet 8:1.00	1 1/2-oz. Hi-Ball 6:1.00		

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