Resources for Writing Effective LTEs

❖ ReThink Media: LTE Quick Tips
❖ NRDC: How to write a successful LTE
❖ Union of Concerned Scientists: Writing an effective LTE
❖ WPSR LTE Example: Emily Grant (2020) “No time to delay health equity” The Spokesman Review

What is an LTE?

WHAT?
● A short (300 words or fewer!) letter to a newspaper’s editor
● Typically a proactive statement in support of, or in opposition to, a particular issue that affects the publication’s readers.

WHY?
● One of the most read sections of a newspaper
● Electeds often get daily clippings of the LTE section
● Easier to place than an Op-Ed/Guest Essay

How to Write an Effective LTE

1. Respond to or cite an article - ideally a front-page article, opinion piece, or editorial; or
2. Respond to a topical issue/policy/event that is relevant to the paper’s readership
3. Focus on ONE main issue & clearly state argument - you only have 200-300 words to make a compelling case!
4. Make it personal and note your expertise - as health professionals, you have unique perspectives to offer, be clear about your point-of-view in the first few sentences!
5. Use supporting evidence (and remember, there are many kinds of evidence: data/research, storytelling from personal experience, quotes from experts of people with lived experience, etc).

6. Identify with a solution & end with a call to action - what do you want your readers to do?

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**Tips for Getting Published**

- **Be timely!** The first 24-48 hours after an article is published is the best window to respond.

- **Respect the word limit!!** One of the easiest ways to have your LTE rejected is to not follow the word limit.

- **Double-check submission guidelines** - Each outlet is unique!

- **Be polite**, papers won't publish insulting pieces. However, it is perfectly okay to be respectfully critical of a paper.

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**Where to Submit?**

Follow the title links for full submission guidelines for each outlet:

**Clark County:**
- [The Columbian](https://www.thecolumbian.com) (Vancouver, WA): 200 words or less

**King County:**
- [Crosscut](https://crosscut.com): No word limit specified
- [Bellevue Reporter](https://bellevuereporter.com): 300 words or less
- [Kent Reporter](https://kenterp.com): 250 words or less
- [Redmond Reporter](https://redmondreporter.com): 300 words or less
- [Renton Reporter](https://rentonreporter.com): 250 words or less
• **Seattle Times**: 200 words or less
• **Seattle Weekly**: No word limit specified (use drop-down menu to choose LTE)
• **Tukwila reporter**: 250 words or less

Kitsap County:
• **Kitsap Daily News**: 250 words or less
• **Kitsap Sun**: 250 words or less

Pierce County/ I-5 Corridor:
• **Bellingham Herald**: 1400 characters including spaces or less
• **Centralia Chronicle**: 500 words or fewer, shorter preferred
• **Olympian**: 250 words or fewer
• **Tacoma News Tribune**: 200 words or less
• **Tacoma Weekly**: No word limit specified
• **Tri-City-herald**: 200 words or less

Snohomish County:
• **Everett Herald Net**: 300 words or less
• **My Edmonds News**: No word limit specified
• **Snohomish County Tribune**: 200 words or less

Spokane County:
• **Inlander**: No word count specified
• **The Spokesman Review**: 250 words or less

Whitman County:
• **Moscow-Pullman Daily News**: No word limit specified
• **Whitman County Gazette**: 500 words or less

Yakima County:
• **Yakima Herald**: 200 word limit for print; 500 for online