

Sample Letter to Elected Officials

Date

Your Name

Your Address

Your E-mail

Your Phone Number

The Honorable _____ House of Representatives or United States Senate Office
Address of Representative or Senator

Dear Representative/Senator _____,

(In your first paragraph include personal information)

I am very fortunate to have been raised by 2 loving parents that taught me the value of family. I now have the responsibility of caring for my aging parents in the nursing home setting. I am growing more concerned each year about our state's ability to care for our most vulnerable residents, those in long-term care. Like most people, I am sure you have spent some time in a nursing home. It is a desolate place for too many and I believe we can do better.

(Include facts) Research has shown that 65% of the 34,000 nursing home residents in our state are receiving a small stipend each month to provide for all their personal expenses. For example, Mrs. Smith receives \$40 each month to cover everything from her haircuts to new shoes. She also wants to keep her phone service on and have an occasional Pepsi. Her money doesn't last 2 weeks because she has no family to help her make ends meet. She skips haircuts and puts off buying new shoes to save money. The system is built for families to step in and cover these "extras" like the occasional Pepsi and a haircut, but what we are seeing is that they don't. The majority of nursing home residents simply do not have visitors. Similar findings have been made in many other states across our country.

(State what you are asking for) I ask that you do more to support and promote volunteerism in our state's nursing homes. Ruby Kate Chitsey, a 12-year-old from Arkansas founded a nonprofit organization to help nursing home residents. It is called "Three Wishes for Ruby's Residents". I hope you will do some research on what this child has accomplished for seniors. Ruby Kate is transforming volunteerism in America's nursing homes and her youth board sets a great example of what we can accomplish on behalf of our seniors. I also ask that you discuss "Ruby's bill" with your colleagues. It is a bill that would increase the monthly stipend for our institutionalized seniors. I challenge you to ask your peers when the last time the stipend was increased for seniors in long-term care. In supporting this bill, funding will be provided that will better support our institutionalized seniors. This is a very small price to invest. All seniors, regardless of socioeconomic status, should have the means to buy the simple things that make life sweeter. I believe that in supporting this bill you will impact the lives of countless seniors.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Your Name