Crafting a Letter to the Editor

A Letter to the Editor (LTE) is a letter sent to a publication about issues of concern from its readers. Letters to the editor are typically 150 words (that’s short!) and have a single main point and single author (you). A letter to the editor should be to hook in readers, while focusing on a clear and concise message about a problem.

Let’s practice!

What is the publication in which you are looking to get published? (Ex. The News & Observer, The NY Times, The Hill)

What are the publication’s rules for submitting Letters to the Editor? (Hint: Use Google “[Name of Publication] LTE Submission”)

What is the problem you would like to discuss? (Ex. Trump’s recent nominee has justified high prescription drug prices as a cost for innovation in the pharmaceutical industry. Alex Azar’s clear conflicts of interest as former president of Eli Lilly will mean less action on drug prices.)

What is the solution? (Ex. Americans cannot afford to have Alex Azar lead the nation’s top health agency.)

What needs to happen to reach this solution? (Ex. Senators Brown and Portman need to stand with the people of Ohio and oppose the confirmation of Alex Azar to the post of Secretary of Health and Human Services.)

Why is it relevant/what is the hook? (Ex. On Monday, November 13, President Trump nominated a former pharmaceutical executive for secretary of Health and Human Services.)

Can you explain this in 100-300 words? (Practice on the back of this page!)