



Yes on 100! Letter to the Editor Guide

Thank you so much for helping with our Letters to the Editor campaign. Other than the front page, the editorial page is often the most commonly read page of many newspapers. It serves as an important tool for citizens to make their voices heard in a political campaign. We must respond quickly to letters and articles that address the measure.

While most newspapers receive hundreds, in some cases even thousands, of letters to the editor, only a few actually make it into the paper. That means every letter we write needs to count, by staying succinct and on-message, using terms everyone understands.

Guiding principles

Follow the rules. Most papers list certain guidelines to follow when contributing a letter. Check your paper's editorial page to see what the guidelines are. For instance, most papers allow around 150 words. Follow these guidelines closely or your letter may get tossed out before it's even read.

Be timely! Keep your eyes open and your ears to the ground. A timely response to a specific story will increase the likelihood that your letter will be published. Always respond within one day to any letter or article that relates to the measure.

Less is more. Shorter letters tend to have a higher chance of being printed and are more likely to be read, so don't write more than necessary.

Stick to the message. In most cases, it's a waste of limited time, space and energy to spend even one sentence talking about our opponent's point of view. Deliver our message instead of rebutting each of their points. Why give the opposition any more publicity that it already has? (Our message: Killing iconic wild species for trinkets, tonic potions, pelts and their parts is cruel and is driving species towards extinction.)

Be personal. The reader should know how and why the issue affects you, your family and your community.

Don't overthink it. Use common language that most people understand. Be reasonable, rational, and show respect for others.

Be clear. Start off by referencing the article or letter to which you're responding. Here's a standard lead sentence: "I agree with the efforts by Oregon citizens to advance a ballot measure to prohibit local sales of endangered species parts and products ("State petition drive seeks to protect endangered wildlife," October 1)."

Be positive. Steer clear of extreme rhetoric. By going too far with your point of view or by predicting doomsday, you can alienate many of your silent supporters.

It never hurts to double check. Campaign staff members are more than happy to do a quick fact check on your letter before you submit it. Feel free to email info@saveanimalsoregon.com or call 503-265-8850

Give your contact info. Include your cell phone number and snail mail address. (Don't worry: they won't publish your contact info.) An editor may call to confirm that you're the author and a real person.

Always email your letter or submit it by the paper's web form. Don't fax or snail mail your letter.

Follow-up. With a smaller paper, it'll often help to call the person responsible for letters to the editor after you submit it. If they can connect a real person with the letter, it's more likely to get printed.

Feel free to take sentence fragments and ideas from the enclosed sample talking points but don't copy them word-for-word. Don't hesitate to call us if you have any questions or to alert us of articles/letters in the paper.

Thank you for your help with this very important part of the campaign, gearing up for November 2016!

Suggested talking points

Here are several points that may be appropriate for you to use in your letter:

- The United States is among the world's top markets for wildlife parts and products. According to one survey, the U.S. has the second largest retail market for ivory after China. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service states that "the U.S. ivory market is contributing to the crisis now threatening the African elephant and that a substantial amount of elephant ivory is illegally imported and enters the domestic market." Market studies and anti-smuggling investigations found endangered species products for sale in Oregon, as reported by Oregon's news outlets.
- Many iconic wild animals are decimated by an alarming rate and pushed to the brink of extinction. Less than 3,200 tigers are left in the wild. All seven sea turtle species are threatened with extinction. The population of African lions has been halved during the past two decades.
- Poaching is cruel and inhumane. Approximately 35,000 elephants in African are slaughtered every year for their ivory. In 2015, poachers killed more than 1,300 rhinos in South Africa alone out of a remaining of 28,000 in the wild. Sometimes poachers hack off an elephant's or rhino's face, while the animal is still alive, to retrieve their tusks or horn. In one recent case, poachers poisoned a watering hole with cyanide, killing 300 elephants at once and resulting in the deaths of other animals who fed on the carcasses.
- Wildlife trafficking is a multi-billion dollar business, making this the fourth most lucrative transnational crime after illicit trades in narcotics, illegal weapons and human trafficking. Well-financed and connected networks of poachers, traffickers and corrupt officials exploit weak governance and insufficient enforcement controls to profit from illegally-traded wildlife goods. Wildlife trafficking fuels transnational crime and undermine global security.
- Supporting Measure 100 will help combat wildlife crimes and save at-risk species from the trade in their parts and products in the Oregon market.
- Measure 100 is supported by leading animal welfare and conservation organizations including the Oregon Humane Society, Oregon Zoo Foundation, the Oregon Coast Aquarium, Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, The Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, the Humane Society of the United States, and the International Fund for Animal Welfare, elected officials, businesses and veterinarians.
- Please vote Yes on 100! to save endangered animals from poaching; find out more by going to www.saveanimalsoregon.com

Example of a published letter to the editor

[Help save endangered animals by signing petition](#) – *Salem Statesman Journal*

The state of Washington took a giant step toward protecting endangered species, and now Oregonians can do the same.

Right now, poachers and traffickers exploit weak laws and regulations to sell ivory, rhino horn, sea turtle shells and other endangered species' parts with little risk of being caught or prosecuted. Consumer demand (including here in Oregon) gives poachers and traffickers incentive to kill more of these endangered animals to make more money.

Oregonians could do our part to preserve endangered species before it's too late, making sure these animals are more than a mere memory for future generations. I signed the petition to put the Save Endangered Animals measure on Oregon's ballot. I hope others will sign too and join me in voting for it in November 2016.

Submitting your letter to your local newspaper(s)

Condense and proof-read: Shorter letters tend to have a higher chance of being printed and read. We've outlined some of the word-limit rules, below. Before you submit your letter, feel free to send it to us at info@saveanimalsoregon.com to help consolidate your message, for feedback, or just for a quick proof-read. We're happy to help!

Submit: Each newspaper has rules regarding submission, for example, some have a form on their website, while others have an email address and require a specific subject line. We've outlined some of these below. Additionally, most papers require that you include some form of contact information (e.g. phone number) so they can confirm that you are the author. They don't print this information in the paper, however. If you're looking for info about another local paper, let us know and we can help!

Select newspaper submission info:

1. The Oregonian: letters@oregonian.com ; 250 words max
2. The Register-Guard (Eugene): rgletters@registerguard.com ; 250 words max
3. Statesman Journal (Salem): [this online form](#) ; 200 words max
4. The Bulletin (Bend): letters@bendbulletin.com ; 250 words max
5. The News-Review (Roseburg): [this online form](#) ; 250 words max
6. Albany Democrat-Herald: news@democratherald.com ; 250 words max
7. Corvallis Gazette-Times: opinion@gtconnect.com ; 250 words max
8. Mail Tribune (Medford): [this online form](#) ; 150 words max
9. Herald and News (Klamath Falls): [this online form](#) ; 310 words max
10. Grants Pass Daily Courier: [this online form](#) / letters@thedailycourier.com ; 250 words max
11. Ashland Daily Tidings: [this online form](#) ; 200 words max
12. The Daily Astorian: editor@dailyastorian.com ; 450 words max
13. The World (Coos Bay): [this online form](#) ; 400 words max
14. The Argus Observer (Ontario): [this online form](#) ; 300 words max
15. East Oregonian (Pendleton): [this online form](#) / editor@eastoregonian.com ; 400 words max
16. The Dalles Chronicle: [this online form](#) ; 250 words max