

# MEDIA TIP

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN LTE AND OP-ED

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### OPINION EDITORIAL

#### THE DIFFERENCE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shorter—about 250 words</li><li>• Published faster</li><li>• Best at quickly countering misinformation or highlighting coming events</li><li>• Send without permission</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Longer—500 plus words</li><li>• Longer lead time</li><li>• Showcases author credibility</li><li>• Generally discuss with paper before sending</li></ul> |
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#### WHEN YOU SHOULD WRITE ONE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your issue has JUST been in the news. The sooner you write, the more likely you are to be published!</li><li>• A vote or action is coming up</li><li>• You want to counter claims of your opponents, an unbalanced story or, unfavorable editorial</li><li>• You want to emphasize a point made in an article</li></ul> | <p>To make a case when first introducing a proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To make lengthier or more complex points</li><li>• When the author has “standing,” such as a known expert or local hero</li><li>• When a paper chooses not to run an editorial or runs a negative editorial</li></ul> |
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#### WHAT YOU SHOULD WRITE

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write from the heart, with passion</li><li>• Be colorful -- cite personal experience</li><li>• Don't assume people have read a past article you're responding to</li><li>• Don't attack the paper or reporter</li><li>• Close with a question or call to action</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A lively, colorful opening is a must!</li><li>• Tie to local issues</li><li>• Make 2-3 key points</li><li>• Provide “expert” viewpoint</li><li>• Close with a call to action</li></ul> |
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#### DON'T FORGET

- Send a copy of your letter/op-ed to lawmakers and officials
- When you're published, circulate a clipping to elected officials and supporters