

Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor: How to Write Persuasively and Advocate Effectively

Month of Healthy Housing Advocacy

October 2, 2025



Today's Goal

**Get started and motivated to write
about healthy housing issues persuasively
and effectively**



Op-Ed Basics

- What's an op-ed?
- Who writes op-eds?
- What's the purpose of an op-ed?
- What's the difference between an op-ed and letter to editor?



Op-Ed Basics

How to get started:

- Own your expertise
- Stay current
- Engage your reader
- Use plain language



Brainstorm Session

- Take five minutes to brainstorm op-ed topics
- Questions to keep in mind:
 - What issue area are you qualified to speak about?
 - What is the relevance or the “so what”?
 - Who is your target audience?



What to Include in Your Op-Ed

- Hook
 - Use the news
 - Tell an anecdote
 - Use an anniversary
 - Cite a major news study
- Argument
- Evidence
- Call to action



Sample Template (1 of 3)

- Sample Headline: *Without AmeriCorps, [TOWN NAME] Will Suffer*
- Opening Paragraph(s): The writer should open with one to three paragraphs that emphasize the tangible impact of AmeriCorps in the region; this should include any or all of the following:
 - Anecdotes
 - Personal stories
 - Data



Sample Template (2 of 3)

- Body and Content:
 - Connect to your state
 - Connect nationally: *For example, if you are writing an op-ed related to education, note that “Nearly 36,000 AmeriCorps members serve annually at more than 9,500 K-12 schools. Additionally, AmeriCorps seniors tutor and mentor over 90,000 children each year.”*

Sample Template (3 of 3)

- Concluding Paragraph

- The concluding paragraph should re-emphasize the call to action and work in AmeriCorps' messages.
- *For example, "Without AmeriCorps, the children in our town will be hungrier, and our environment will be more polluted. Congress is facing challenging budgetary decisions, but Congressman Smith and all other members of Congress invest in AmeriCorps to ensure that our community doesn't lose necessary resources and supports. AmeriCorps is one of the best decisions Congress can make to increase local impact on critical challenges; every \$1 Congress invests in AmeriCorps returns more than \$17 in benefits to local communities. AmeriCorps programs, which touch every community in America, require a robust strategic investment, which was called for by a sizable bipartisan group of senators and representatives earlier this year. Our congressional delegation can help ensure that investment comes to [TOWN NAME] by fully funding AmeriCorps."*



Brainstorm Session

- Take five minutes to brainstorm op-ed content based on topic(s) identified in the first brainstorm session.



Publishing Your Op-Ed

- Editing support
- Tips for publishing op-ed
 - Research publication
 - Include your contact information
 - Follow up
 - Accept changes



Questions?



Resources

- [Op-Ed Writing: The Basics — The OpEd Project](#)
- [op eds and letters to the editor.pdf](#)
- [new seglin how to write an oped 1 25 17 7.pdf](#)
- [op-ed.pdf](#)
- [Template Op-ed-June-2024.pdf](#)



Thank You