

## **How to write an op-ed piece:**

Whereas letters to the editor are generally used as a way to respond to a news story or opinion piece, an op-ed piece gives you an opportunity to discuss your issue in greater depth, tell a personal story, or give the background on your issue.

*When drafting an op-ed:*

- Don't write too much—650-700 words max.
  
- Make it newsworthy! Try any of these methods:
  - Tie your story to a hot topic currently being covered in the news
  - Highlight injustices or hypocrisy that your story reveals
  - Link your story to local issues that impact residents
  - Detail a controversy or conflict in the community
  - Identify individuals with direct experience who can provide an authentic voice in your story
  - Relate to a significant anniversary, milestone, or holiday
  - Include compelling visuals in your story or provide journalists with an interest scene or event to shoot
  
- Make it personal and significant for readers.

Keep it simple with one well-developed idea and a conclusion regarding what you want to happen (a call to action).

Works used:

Wallack, Lawrence, and Katie Woodruff, and Lori Dorfman, and Iris Diaz. News for a Change: An Advocate's Guide to Working With the Media. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1999.