

City News

From Councilwoman Jeanne Faatz



Officials offer pointers on how to make your point

You don't call your doctor to say what *doesn't* hurt. And if a bus driver treated you rudely, you wouldn't ring up the White House to complain.

You have to contact the right person, the right way. For public officials, that's increasingly by e-mail. If you want to sound off, say to U.S. Sen. Mark Udall, e-mail is best at www.markudall.senate.gov.

Same for Colorado's other U.S. senator, Michael Bennet, at www.bennet.senate.gov. Bennet likes e-mails but you can also call his office at (303) 455-7600 and speak your piece.

Both senators want to know what you think, as do most elected officials. But the way they prefer to communicate can vary. Which is why my office polled a number of officials after a constituent said she wanted to express her views but wondered how to be effective. Here's what we found:

When you call the office of U.S. Rep. Diana DeGette, assistants record your opinion or preference on an issue. When you write a letter, DeGette takes time to read what you've taken time to write.

The key is to decide whether you want to seek help or make a complaint. In the former case, DeGette asks that you call her Denver office at (303) 844-4988. Bennet asks that you call his office if your issue concerns Social Security or the IRS.

For other officials, e-mail is best. Contact state Sen. Chris Romer at Chris.romer.senate@state.co.us anytime and state Rep. Jeanne Labuda at Jeanne.labuda.house@state.co.us during the legislative session and at (303) 914-9494 other times. School questions should go to board member Michelle Moss at michelle_moss@dpsk12.org, and transit issues to RTD member Barbara Brohl at Barbara.brohl@rtd-denver.com

The best way of contacting me is by calling my office at (303) 763-8562 or by sending an e-mail to Jeanne.Faatz@denvergov.org. Include your name, address and phone number and a short statement about what you want me to do.

Remember, be brief, be clear and you'll be heard!

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