# **Sample Letter to State Officials – NJ**

**Trans Rights**

**This is a sample letter template you can use to contact your state elected officials to urge them to support students and institutions in considering access opportunities for trans individuals in higher education. Complete the letter by filling in the information specific to you and providing an example or two of how students you work with benefit from state-level inclusivity investments in higher education to personalize your letter. You do not need to name specific students or indicate the institution you work at. You may also make other changes to the text in the template, to add or remove specific information and tailor your letter to focus on the issues most important to you.**

[date]

Dear [title] [last name]:

As your constituent living in [your city], I am writing today in reference to [pending legislation in the chamber of the official you’re writing].

As a student affairs professional, I see first-hand how state-level policies support students. Student affairs is a critical component of the higher education experience, collaborating with colleagues across institutions of higher education to offer students valuable learning opportunities, meaningful social engagements, and safe and inclusive environments.

[Insert personal statement or story.]

On behalf of our students, I urge you to work with your legislative colleagues to support measures that increase trans rights, protections, and inclusivity, and oppose those that work against these values. Policies and laws that restrict the rights of trans individuals to access public bathroom or changing facilities or to require identification documentation to treat trans individuals consistent with their gender identity is discriminatory. In the 2018 state legislative session alone 18 exclusionary and anti-trans measures were introduced. Such legislation has the potential to increase harassment in and around public and school bathrooms and increase danger for trans individuals and others suspected of violating these laws, resulting in the laws decreasing safety instead of their oft-stated intent to increase safety.

I also want to express my approval of those states that have proposed and passed inclusive legislation. During this past legislative session, states also introduced as many as 8 measures to increase trans inclusivity, from the creation of a trans legislation oversight taskforce (NJ A 1727, NJ S 705), to the expansion of public gender neutral bathrooms to all public buildings (VT HB 333). These are the kinds of measures that increase student safety and wellness, which lead to higher completion rates and success outcomes.

The future of our nation’s knowledge economy relies on a college-educated workforce. I am relying on you to do what is right both for [your state]’s students and our nation as a whole.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I look forward to hearing from you about your plans to support our students and institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,

[name]

[address, including zip code]