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Building the **Right to Health** Movement



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Writing Letters to the Editor

- What is an LTE?
- Making your LTE EPIC
- Let's write an LTE!
- How to get Published
- You're published, now what?



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Letters to the Editor

What is an LTE?

- A clear and concise 100-300 word letter in response to current events or a recently published article
- Usually one but can be multiple authors



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Why write an LTE?

- Quick-to-write and powerful
- Generates coverage
- Amplifies our voice
- Decision makers care



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Making your LTE EPIC

Frame your letter in
the **EPIC** format:

Engage audience



NEW HAVEN REGISTER
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letter to the Editor: Lawmakers need to commit to ending HIV/AIDS



POSTED: 02/15/16, 5:38 PM EST | UPDATED: ON 02/15/2016 | 1 COMMENT

Last Tuesday, President Barack Obama's final budget was released in the morning. Totaling \$4.1 billion, it includes many budget proposals that could spell out changes for the United States over the final year of his term. However, one area in which it is completely lacking is increased funding for global health priorities.

Frame your letter in
the **EPIC** format:

Problem statement

Duluth News Tribune

Reader's view: Fight against AIDS requires more federal government money

By Julia Mandsager Komatsu from Duluth on Dec 1, 2015 at 12:11 a.m.



I'm a medical student in Duluth, and I'm writing because today, Dec. 1, is World AIDS Day. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, 7,960 Minnesotans were living with HIV/AIDS in 2014. In the same year, there were 307 new cases of HIV, up 2 percent from 2013. Globally, there were 26.9 million people living with HIV, including 2 million new cases, according to the World Health Organization.

While there have been major improvements in HIV treatment and management, this virus still is deadly. In 2014, there were 64 AIDS deaths in Minnesota and 1.2 million globally.

Keep your LTE EPIC

Frame your letter in
the **EPIC** format:

Inform on solution



Frame your letter in
the **EPIC** format:

Call to action





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Is your LTE EPIC?

- Engage audience
- Problem statement
- Inform on solution
- Call to action

The word 'EPIC!' is written in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font with a thick black outline and a slight 3D effect, giving it a comic book or graphic design feel.



THE DAILY

Guest Editorial: We have the power to end AIDS

Madhavi Kuthanur Sophomore/ Medical Anthropology and Global Health Mar 10, 2017  (0)



If you ask people living in the West about Tuberculosis (TB), they will most likely tell you that it is a disease of the past. Unfortunately, TB is still very much alive and it is currently the leading global infectious disease killer. TB also happens to be the primary cause of death for those infected with HIV/AIDS. We have the power to end AIDS by making treatments accessible for more infected individuals. Research has shown that for AIDS, treatment equals prevention, so it is crucial that we increase funding for AIDS and TB treatments.

Funding for PEPFAR has severely declined by hundreds of millions of dollars in the last five years. We need to prioritize investing in treatments in order to continue the progress we've made to fight the AIDS epidemic. The solution is to increase funding to PEPFAR by \$667 million dollars for the next three years in order to reach the goal of \$2 billion dollars by 2020. I believe that our politicians have a moral responsibility to do what they can to help fight the AIDS epidemic by supporting



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Let's write an LTE!

- **What Publication?**
 - Think local
 - Relationship to target
 - Relationship to audience
- **What are their rules?**
 - Length
 - Article Requirements
 - Author Requirements
 - When do they publish?

Letters to the Editor Worksheet

This worksheet was created by Matt Erdos (Advocacy Lead, PIH Engage Boston University) and adapted by the National Team. Thanks, Matt!

A *Letter to the Editor (LTE)* is a letter sent to a publication about issues of concern from its readers. Letters to the editor are typically 150 words (that's short!) and have a single main point and single author (you, not PIH). A letter to the editor should be positive and current to hook in readers, while focusing on a clear and concise message about a problem.

Let's practice!

What is the publication in which you are looking to get published? (Ex. The Daily Free Press, BU Today, Boston Globe, etc.)

What are the publication's rules for submitting Letters to the Editor? (Hint: Use Google!)

What is the problem you would like to discuss? (Ex. Cuts to Global AIDS funding under the Obama administration has scaled back progress towards ending HIV/AIDS)



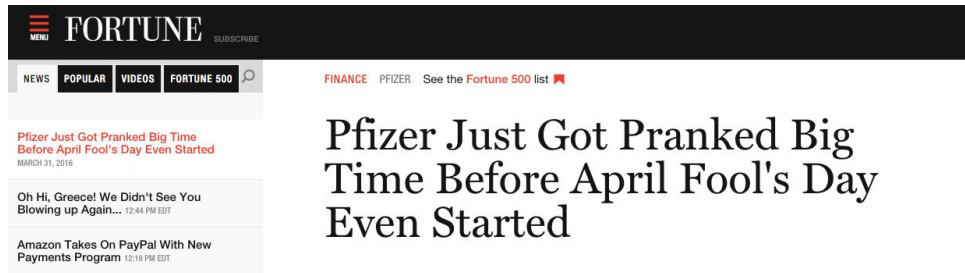
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Audience

Who do you want your piece to reach?



- **What's the hook?**
 - Timing is Key
 - Relevant
 - Newsworthy
 - Respond to article/
current events
- **What's the problem?**
 - One sentence
summary
 - Be clear
 - Think big picture



The screenshot shows the Fortune magazine website interface. At the top, there is a black navigation bar with the 'FORTUNE' logo and a 'SUBSCRIBE' link. Below the navigation bar, there are several menu items: 'NEWS', 'POPULAR', 'VIDEOS', and 'FORTUNE 500'. A search icon is also present. The main content area features a prominent article headline: 'Pfizer Just Got Pranked Big Time Before April Fool's Day Even Started' with a sub-headline 'MARCH 31, 2016'. To the right of the headline, there are links for 'FINANCE', 'PFIZER', and 'See the Fortune 500 list'. Below the main article, there are two smaller article teasers: 'Oh Hi, Greece! We Didn't See You Blowing up Again...' and 'Amazon Takes On PayPal With New Payments Program'.

FORTUNE SUBSCRIBE

NEWS POPULAR VIDEOS FORTUNE 500

FINANCE PFIZER See the Fortune 500 list

Pfizer Just Got Pranked Big Time Before April Fool's Day Even Started
MARCH 31, 2016

Oh Hi, Greece! We Didn't See You Blowing up Again... 12:44 PM EDT

Amazon Takes On PayPal With New Payments Program 12:18 PM EDT

- **What's the solution?**
 - Use the rationale for our advocacy asks.
 - Write the ask(s) in 1-2 sentences.
- **Call to Action**
 - Name the target.
 - Ask voters for something.
 - Ask target for something.





How to get published



Letters to the Editor

The Editorial Board highly values responses to all our published opinions in addition to comments and responses to other Crimson content. Letters to the editor are rarely more than 300 words and are signed by the author or authors. We do not accept letters to the editor from organizations or anonymous writers. Letters that are brief and timely (and perhaps witty or humorous) are more likely to be published. Letters to the editor should be submitted to editorial@thecrimson.com.





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PIHE Efforts



StarTribune



The Huntington News

The independent student newspaper of the Northeastern community



Gloucester Daily Times

Newspaper of the Year | Serving Cape Ann



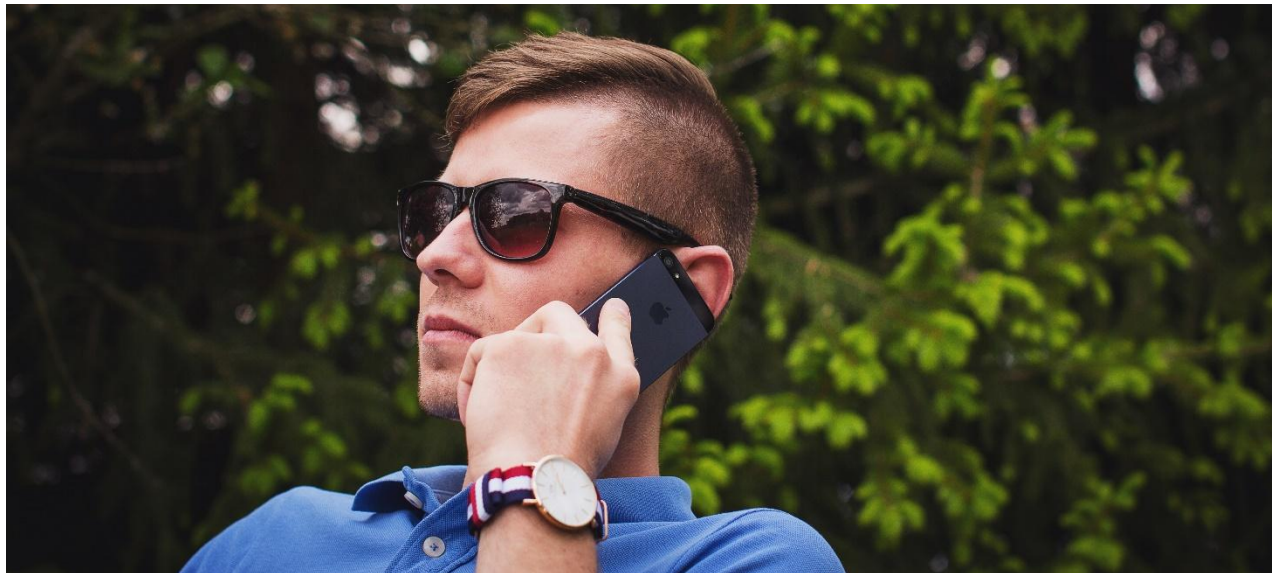
The Red & Black



**PIPE
DREAM**



- If you don't get a confirmation
- If you don't get published
- If you do get published





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**You're published –
now what?**

Share your LTE

- Once you're published:
 - Fill out the LTE report form:
http://engage.pih.org/lte_to
 - Tell your coach!
- Share:
 - With your **team**
 - With your **target**
 - On social media (FB PIHE group)





Putting it all together

1. Decide on a target publication and read rules.
2. Begin with your hook.
3. Outline the problem.
4. Detail solutions.
5. Call the audience to action.
6. Edit: check for flow and rules.
7. Submit your letter.
8. Fill out LTE report form, tell your coach, and share!



- Draft your LTE from the worksheet
- Submit your LTE
- Teach your team!
- Share your success



Key Takeaways for LTEs

- Make sure you have a clear hook and message!
 - What are you responding to?
 - What ideas or solutions do you want to advance?
- Your writing should be...
 - Positive, personal, and values-based
 - Assertive and confident as well as credible
- You want to...
 - Think about your audience (target)
 - Make policy and social justice issues personable (relate)
 - Combine data with themes and anecdotes (validate)
 - Hit an emotional point (connect)

