



Tips for Submitting Effective Comments

Overview

Submitting comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov is an easy and effective way to provide constructive, reasoned, and evidence-based guidance to improve federal regulations and policymaking. The Office of Federal Strategy is available to support Johns Hopkins affiliates interested in influencing regulatory action. Contact us at fedaffairs@jhu.edu.

What You Need to Know

The Office of Federal Strategy is available to support regulatory engagement and can provide:

- In-depth political analysis and context for the proposal
 - Guidance related to internal approval processes, if needed
 - Awareness of positioning of other Hopkins divisions/centers/units
 - Protocol advice related to tone, formatting, and style
- Tips for addressing trade-offs and opposing views in your comment
 - Connections to national trade and professional associations and other stakeholder groups, if appropriate
 - Support in determining who should sign and who should be alerted internally for situational awareness
 - Complementary methods of providing feedback, including in-person meetings
 - Access to archived Johns Hopkins comments and historical engagement on the issue

Comment Letter Tips

1. Identify the rule you are commenting on and provide the Regulation Identifier Number (RIN), plus any word, column, or paragraph citation from the federal register document to clearly identify the issues or parts of the proposed regulation on which you are responding.

2. Be constructive and offer an alternative or modified approach to meeting the same objective or, if you disagree with the action, suggest not regulating at all.

3. Use data and evidence to support your argument, including relevant personal or professional experience, if appropriate.

4. Avoid jargon and acronyms; use plain language and headings to group information into meaningful chunks.

5. Use the disclaimer *"The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Johns Hopkins University or the Johns Hopkins Health System"* in your comment letter and remove any logos because you are commenting as a subject matter expert, not on behalf of your employer.

6. Distinguish your comment from others by identifying your credentials and expertise—avoid form letters.

7. Know your audience and demonstrate the ways in which your recommendation reflects the best interests of the federal government and federal taxpayers.

8. Be aware of deadline; you have until 11:59 p.m. Eastern time that day to submit your comment.

9. Timely comments become a matter of public record. The comment, attachments, and supporting materials will be posted without change to Regulations.gov, including any personal information provided.

Additional Resources

Find a rule on Regulations.gov by entering a keyword, title, or document ID in the search area on the homepage and click the "Search" button. Once you find the regulation of interest, click its title to view the Document Details page.

From the rules page, you can click the green "Submit a Formal Comment" button in the right corner to upload your file. You can also see other comments that have already been submitted.

To learn more about the stages of the federal rulemaking process and view related frequently asked questions, visit [Regulations.gov/learn](https://www.regulations.gov/learn).

Bonus material

Check out the Johns Hopkins Lerner Center for Public Health Advocacy video, *Engaging in Agency Rulemaking: How to Submit Effective Public Comments*.

For more information contact Federal Strategy at fedaffairs@jhu.edu. Johns Hopkins affiliates should contact the office of Government, Community and Economic Partnerships at gce@jhu.edu with questions about state or local regulatory action and process as it differs from the federal process referenced here.

"A single, well-supported comment may carry more weight than a thousand form letters."

- Regulations.gov