An important part of this course is not just to learn about controversial social issues and to be able to form an educated opinion on them, but to also advocate for your views. One way of doing this is to contact your elected representatives in Montpelier and in Washington, DC.

Your current elected officials are:

Governor Peter Shumlin: http://governor.vermont.gov/

Rep. Peter Welch: http://welch.house.gov/

Sen. Bernie Sanders: http://www.sanders.senate.gov/

Sen. Patrick Leahy: http://www.leahy.senate.gov/

On each website, there is a "Contact" tab where you can send a message stating your views and what you would like them to do. It is important that you tell these elected officials what you want them to do as they represent you – you are their constituency.

For each topic we cover, you are to send two (2) messages to your elected officials. You can definitely send more than this, but this is the minimum. You can pick any specific aspect you want for these messages, but it must deal with a specific aspect of the topic (like parental consent laws) and not just with a general idea (like abortion).

For each message, it is important to be courteous and respectful. You can still get your point across while remaining respectful. Please include the following:

- Introduce yourself (name, age, school)
- Explain why you are contacting them
- Explain your views on this specific issue (be as specific as possible in terms of facts, laws, court rulings, statistics, etc.)
- Discuss your views on how they have voted on this issue in the past
- Explain what you would like them to do

The assignment for these is to print out your message from the website BEFORE you send it and turn this in, either via GoogleDocs or in print.