

Sample Letter to Congress Bread for the World Have Faith, End Hunger

Why Handwritten Letters?

Because they work! Research from the Congressional Management Foundation confirms that handwritten, mailed letters are still the best way to communicate with your members of Congress.

In fact, 96 percent of Capital Hill staff reported in a survey that if their member of Congress had not reached a decision on an issue, personalized letters would influence his or her position.

Personalized emails can also be effective, but congressional offices experience large of email and sometimes lack the additional staff to handle the volume and evaluate the email's authenticity.

Urging our nation's leaders to end hunger

Handwritten letters from constituents of members of Congress are always read and logged.

Sample Letter:

Date _____

Dear Senator _____ or Representative _____

As Congress works on the appropriations process for fiscal year 2012, I am asking you to protect funding for poverty-focused development assistance. Although we send only a small fraction of our budget on these programs, their impact is huge.

These small investments in overseas anti-poverty programs enhance our national security, By protecting the most vulnerable, we provide people with choices and reduce the likelihood of conflict. Research has shown that for every 5 percent drop in income growth in a developing country, the likelihood of violent conflict or war within the next year increases by 10 percent. Even former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has said: "Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers....."

Disproportionate cuts to poverty-focused development assistance will restrict our ability to respond to humanitarian emergencies, such as the unfolding famine in the Horn of Africa. Now is not the time to cut short-term famine relief. It is also imperative that we protect long-term development assistance in order to build sustainable paths out of poverty in developing countries. For more than 50 years, the United States has played an important role in alleviating malnutrition and hunger, especially during emergencies. Now is not the time to pull back.

We must do all we can to reduce the budget deficit. But we cannot balance the budget on the on the backs of the most vulnerable people.

Please protect families and children in developing countries from budget cuts that cost lives.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Address

Four Simple Steps:

1. Write your name and address at the end of your letter AND on the envelope, so your members of Congress know you are one of the people they represent.
2. Ask for specific action, using this sentence in your own words:
I ask you to reform foreign aid to make it more effective in reducing poverty.
3. Give reasons why. Some examples:
 - Share your personal story about what motivates you to write. Letters with personal stories are the most compelling and effective.
 - My church is already helping by *[example]*, but I also expect my country to take the lead in combating global poverty
4. Send your letter to Congress.

Put each letter in a separate envelope
And address it. Send your letter to:

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

OR

The Honorable Rand Paul
United State Senate
208 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

OR

Representative Ben Chandler
1504 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Because of security procedures, your letter may take two to four weeks to reach Congress, so please plan accordingly.

Your letters will make an important difference for people who are hungry and poor.