



Write a Letter to Your Member of Congress

Purpose:

Concise, personal, and hand written letters are one of the most effective ways of influencing US elected officials. ONE frequently asks its members to write letters that educate Members of Congress on a specific issue and help distinguish between foreign affairs spending priorities. Collectively, letters to Members of Congress demonstrate the impact of your advocacy work with ONE on your campus and in your congressional district.

Strategy:

Keep it simple. The best letters are direct and to the point, highlighting a single issue and the respective global mechanism (i.e. HIV/AIDS – PEPFAR; Hunger- Feed the Future; Child vaccines – GAVI). The most impactful letters are hand-written, gathered and hand-delivered to the Member of Congress' in-district office.

Components:

- Introduction: Include your name and that you are a constituent and a ONE member
- "Ask" – Brief (1-2 sentence) statement including the specific request for the Member of Congress. Include the name of the bill and the bill number if applicable.
- Support – Paragraph explaining why your "ask" is important to you and why your Member of Congress should act on this issue. Statistics can make a powerful argument for your point and help paint a picture of the impact of extreme poverty.
- Personal connection – If you have a personal story or comment to include specific to the "ask." The most effective letters and the ones that include a personalized message.
- Thank You – Thank the MOC for being a champion, a leader, or their service to the district/state
- Contact Information – Your name, physical address (in the MOC's state or district), email and phone number

Find who to contact:

Go to www.house.gov and www.senate.gov to find out the names of your senators and your representative. Searching for their names on the web is usually a quick way to find their websites and mailing address.

ACTIONS. SPEAK. LOUDER.



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Proper Format:

To Your Senator/Representative:

The Honorable (full name)

(Room #) (Name of Senate Office Building or House Office Building) or local office address found on member's website

City, State, Zip

Dear Senator/Representative:

Introduction – My name is _____, I am a constituent and a ONE member from (town) (state)

"Ask" - I am writing to ask you to support (a specific bill name or an issue/mechanism; i.e. the Senate version of the FY2014 State and Foreign Operations budget request).

Support (Facts) - Smart international development programs make up less than 1% of the U.S. budget and are saving lives and empowering communities around the world. With the help of programs like PEPFAR and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria, and Tuberculosis, over 6.6 million people are now on lifesaving HIV medication, up from just 100,000 in 2002. Adults once dying from HIV/AIDS can now return to work and pull themselves out of poverty. This reduces the number of orphans and increases the number of children who can go to school. I support the importance of making sure the US is fiscally responsible. That is why as a taxpayer I support the less than 1% of the US budget invested in smart, results-based, effective programs like PEPFAR and the Global Fund that both address poverty in the poorest nations and contribute to a stronger national security strategy as stated by several military leaders, current and past secretaries of defense.

Personal connection (optional): During my study abroad in South Africa, I saw firsthand the impact of lifesaving HIV medication on local citizens and the crucial role of US led programs in protecting the best American values abroad.

Thank You – Thank you for your leadership in the district (or for being a champion on these issues).

Sincerely,

Your Name, ONE Member

Your Address

Reporting: Make sure to report your letter and/or delivery <http://campus.one.org/report-points>

ACTIONS. SPEAK. LOUDER.