

CARE 2008 Election Toolkit



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Resources

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Sample letter requesting a meeting with a candidate

John Smith
326 Plains St.
Kenosha, WI 53142

Bob Roberts for Congress Campaign
Attn: Susie Jones, Scheduler
425 State St., Room 225
La Crosse, WI 54601-3341

Sent via FAX: 608-782-5585

July 16, 2008

Dear Mr. Roberts:

As a constituent and CARE supporter, I am writing to request a meeting in your La Crosse campaign office to discuss four key issues that play an important role in the fight against global poverty.

As you know, we have the resources today to eradicate the worst forms of poverty and injustice. America has always been a generous nation, and it's time to commit ourselves to bold goals that will improve life for millions around the world. But I am worried that our current investment in the fight against poverty does not reflect the high stakes: our economic stability, national security and moral standing in the world. I'd like to share ways that you could take a leadership role in Congress to give a voice to the voiceless; namely to make the issue of global poverty a priority for the U.S. government.

There are over 500,000 CARE supporters in the United States, who are passionate about supporting the fight against global poverty. CARE is one of the largest poverty-fighting organizations with more than 60 years of experience. CARE works to address underlying causes of poverty through programs that advance education, improve health, increase economic opportunity and meet emergency needs during and after disasters.

A group of us would like the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these important issues. I will follow up with your staff to find a time that works best with your schedule or you can contact me directly at 555-432-5968.

Yours sincerely,
John Smith

NOTES: *Call the campaign headquarters to find out who you should contact about arranging a meeting (contact information can often be found online or by calling directory assistance in the largest city in your district and asking for the campaign headquarters of your candidate)*

Sample Letter to the Editor on the Farm Bill

San Jose Mercury News

Letter to the Editor

August 22, 2007

Word count: 229

Re: "No thanks and keep your farm aid"

Many thanks for this column highlighting the wastefulness of the practice of selling U.S. commodities to fund anti-poverty and anti-hunger programs.

While providing food outright is one way to fight hunger, especially when a natural disaster strikes, there are many more creative ways of helping the hungry, not just in emergencies, but day after day. Unfortunately, these efforts are limited or prohibited by the current Farm Bill.

Right now, U.S. government food aid to needy people must be produced here and shipped overseas on U.S. flagged vessels. It would save time, money and lives if the law was changed to allow buying food locally or within the region where it is needed. At times, the issue is not food, but poverty. There is plenty of food available but people are simply too poor to buy it; they need small cash transfers to enable them to buy their own food, but cash is in short supply.

As your column suggests, buying and shipping U.S. food aid does not help small farm families in the United States. In fact, it can even hurt small farmers in developing countries who have to compete against the food that is imported into the country. Congress should realize that moving away from unneeded shipments of food and increasing cash and flexibility to fight hunger is a more efficient, faster and better use of my tax dollars.

Sincerely,

Alina Labrada

Volunteer with CARE, the international poverty-fighting organization

How to use CARE Connections



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1. Go to the Elections 2008 group (www.care.org/Elections2008) and join the group and create a profile.
2. Search "Events" by your zipcode for anything related to your candidate.
3. If there are no events...make something happen!
4. As you learn about events your candidate will be at, make sure an event is created on CARE Connections so others can learn about these events and attend them.
5. If you can arrange a meeting, make an event for that meeting too. This allows other advocates to support you in this venture.
6. If you want to create a group for your district, state, or a specific candidate - do it! Use this group to organize on a more local level, just don't forget to make your group a member of Elections 2008.

Useful Web Resources



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Congressional Information – www.house.gov;
www.majorityleader.gov/calendar.asp; www.senate.gov
Current House / Senate schedule and other information

Thomas - <http://thomas.loc.gov>
A clearinghouse for legislative information.
Includes bills introduced, legislative summaries and status, votes and committee information.

Interaction – www.interaction.org
InterAction is the largest coalition of U.S.-based international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) focused on the world's poor and most vulnerable people.

Global Health Council – www.globalhealth.org
The Global Health Council works to ensure that all who strive for improvement and equity in global health have the information and resources they need to succeed.

Center for Global Development - www.cgdev.org
CGD is an independent, not-for-profit think tank that works to reduce global poverty and inequality by encouraging policy change in the U.S. and other rich countries through rigorous research and active engagement with the policy community.

Population Action International (PAI) – www.populationaction.org
Population Action International (PAI) is an independent policy advocacy group working to strengthen political and financial support worldwide for population programs grounded in individual rights.

The One Campaign - www.one.org
The ONE Campaign seeks to raise public awareness about the issues of global poverty, hunger, disease and efforts to fight such problems in developing countries.

United Nations Development Programme - <http://www.undp.org/>
UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

CARE Action Network – <http://www.care.org/getinvolved/advocacy/index.asp>
The CARE Action Network, or CAN, is a group of CARE supporters working to educate our nation's leaders about issues of global poverty.

Project Vote Smart – <http://www.votesmart.org>
The voters self-defense system. A great resource for all kinds of information about candidates.