

## Congressional Meeting Guide

**Our ASKS for members of Congress are:**

- **Support at least \$61.7 billion in funding for the International Affairs Budget for fiscal year (FY) 2025**
- **Support at least \$400 million for women’s economic security through the Gender Equity and Equality (GEEA) Fund for FY2025**

### BEFORE THE MEETING

Coordinating meeting roles with your group during our strategy session is essential to ensure you have successful meetings. Make sure each member of the group has one of the following roles:

- **Meeting Leader:** This will be assigned to a constituent for the member of Congress. The meeting leader will kick-off the meeting, ensure the asks are made and send a thank you note after the meeting.
- **Designated Advocate:** This will be an assigned group member who has a specific speaking role during the meeting.
- **Notetaker:** This will be a group member assigned to take notes during the meeting and a picture after the meeting to submit in the Soapbox mobile tool.

### MEETING OUTLINE & TALKING POINTS

This outline will help you have a successful meeting and includes our asks. *Note: you won’t have time to make every point—use the talking points as a helpful resource.*

#### INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE MEMBER OF CONGRESS OR STAFF (MEETING LEADER)

- **Meeting Leader** opens the meeting and says where they’re from in the district or state.
  - Thank the member of Congress for taking time to meet and discuss issues that are important to you and other constituents in his/her state/district.
  - Acknowledge that **March 8 was International Women’s Day**, which celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women globally and serves as a call to action for gender equality.
  - In one sentence, explain why you’re advocating with CARE and why you care about fighting global poverty.
  - Ask other participants to introduce themselves (name and hometown only).

#### INTRODUCE CARE (DESIGNATED ADVOCATE)

- CARE has fought global poverty for more than 75 years.
- This year, CARE and partners have worked in 111 countries, reaching more than 174 million people through nearly 1,500 projects.

- CARE works to end poverty by addressing its underlying causes and by putting women and girls, and gender equality at the heart of all we do.
- CARE works alongside women because evidence shows that women and girls are powerful agents of change in their communities.

### **INTRODUCE ISSUE AND MAKE THE TOPLINE ‘ASK’ (DESIGNATED ADVOCATE)**

We’re here today to ask you to support at least **\$61.7 billion for the International Affairs Budget for FY2025.**

- U.S. foreign assistance funding comprises roughly 1% of the federal budget yet delivers immeasurable benefits around the world. We need robust foreign assistance funding to meet global needs.
- Shocks caused by COVID-19, the global economic recession, conflict, and climate change have interrupted the decades-long gains we’ve made towards eradicating poverty worldwide. We are still facing a global hunger crisis and the cost of basic necessities is out of reach for many.
- These challenges are even more dire for women and girls, who have less access to resources and opportunities and face greater risk of violence. We cannot end poverty if we don’t support the needs and potential of half the population through robust international development and humanitarian assistance funding.
- CARE has witnessed the profound difference foreign assistance makes, especially in the lives of women and girls.
- These cost-effective programs that support women and girls can change lives, address the root causes of poverty and lead to stronger economic growth, better governance, and greater food security.
  - **In a few sentences, a Global Woman Leader or Designated Advocate shares a story on the local impact of these programs.**
- The FY23 International Affairs Budget was funded at \$61.7 billion—this is the bare minimum needed to address global needs.
- **“Will [MEMBER OF CONGRESS’ NAME] support no less than \$61.7 billion in funding for the FY2025 International Affairs Budget?”**

### **DISCUSS SPECIFIC ACCOUNTS CARE SUPPORTS (DESIGNATED ADVOCATE)**

We urge you to support robust funding for specific accounts in the State and Foreign Operations bill that are critical to global development, particularly the economic security of women and girls.

- Supporting women’s economic security is a critical part of alleviating poverty, achieving gender equality, and promoting economic growth around the world.
- We ask you to support at least **\$400 million** for the **Gender Equity and Equality Action (GEEA) Fund** to:

- **Increase** women’s access to resources, services, and leadership opportunities; and
- **Address barriers** that limit women's full participation in the economy
- In its first year (2021-2022), the GEEA Fund supported 58 activities in 63 countries, reaching more than half a million people around the world. Other notable outcomes and activities of the GEEA Fund include:
  - More than 3,100 women-owned microenterprises were able to access loans, bank accounts, and other services.
  - More than 64,000 women gained legal recognition to land and marine areas.
  - \$50 million was committed to help launch the World Bank’s Invest in Childcare Initiative to expand accessible, affordable childcare services in at least ten low- and middle- income countries.
  - \$50 million committed to the Women in Digital Economy Fund (WiDEF) to help close the gender digital divide.
- The GEEA Fund is unique because it is a foreign assistance fund that provides dedicated and direct resources to USAID and the State Department for programs aimed at supporting women’s and girls’ economic security.
- The GEEA Fund currently includes initiatives started under the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Fund, which was launched in 2019.
- **“Will [MEMBER OF CONGRESS’ NAME] support \$400 million for women’s economic security through the GEEA Fund for FY2025?”**

### **CONCLUDE MEETING (MEETING LEADER)**

- **Constituent** thanks the member of Congress and/or staff for meeting.
- Ask if the member of Congress will support at least \$61.7 billion for the International Affairs Budget and \$400 million for the GEEA Fund for FY2025.
- Ask the member of Congress and/or staff to take a picture to post on social media.
- Tell the member of Congress you hope to meet with them in-district during an upcoming congressional recess.

### **AFTER THE MEETING**

#### **TAKE A PICTURE, POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND UPLOAD IN SOAPBOX MOBILE TOOL (NOTETAKER)**

Ask the member or staff to take a group picture to post on your social media accounts and share with CARE through the Soapbox mobile tool; tag the member of Congress and CARE (@CARE on Twitter, @carefans on Facebook, or @careorg on Instagram); and use #SheLeadsTheWorld. You can copy and paste the following to post:

On the Hill with @CARE 🏛️ Just met with [**@Senator/Congressman's**] office to discuss how [**he/she**] can support women's and girls' rights and fight global poverty w/ robust global funding. #SheLeadsTheWorld

**PROVIDE MEETING FEEDBACK (NOTETAKER)**

Immediately after each meeting, complete the meeting feedback form in the Soapbox mobile tool. Include meeting details and any required follow up. These notes will be shared with CARE staff for further follow-up.

**SEND THANK YOU EMAIL (MEETING LEADER)**

Send a thank you email to the congressional staff you met with by personalizing the below template.

**To:** [**STAFF CONTACT NAME**]

**Subject:** Thank You for Meeting with CARE

**Email Body:**

Dear [**STAFF CONTACT NAME**]:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and [**INSERT GROUP MEMBER NAMES**] on March 14 about Fiscal Year 2025 foreign assistance funding.

As a reminder, CARE works to end poverty by addressing its underlying causes and by putting women and girls, and gender equality, at the heart of all we do. I hope you will stand with women and girls around the world by supporting the following legislative requests:

- At least \$61.7 billion in funding for the International Affairs Budget for fiscal year 2025.
- At least \$400 million for the Gender Equity and Equality Action Fund to strengthen women's access to employment opportunities, support entrepreneurship, create market linkages; and break down barriers to women's participation in the economy.

Together, these requests will change millions of lives every year, address the root causes of poverty, decrease dependency, and build stronger, more resilient societies.

Thank you again for standing with us to fight poverty, injustice, and discrimination worldwide to create a better, more just tomorrow. Please reach out to me if you have additional questions. I look forward to staying in touch.

Sincerely,  
[**YOUR NAME**]