

Writing Letters to Congress

The Two-Minute Letter

An effective letter to Congress needs three things:

1. Put your name and address at the end of your letter AND on the envelope, so your members of Congress know that you are one of the people they represent.

2. Ask for specific action, using the sentence below or your own words:

I ask you to protect and strengthen key tax credits that can make a big difference for low-income workers and their families.

3. Give reasons why. Examples are:

- Share your personal story about what motivates you to write. Letters with personal stories are the most compelling and effective. Have you or someone you know been affected by these tax credits?

- In the midst of the debate over which taxes to change and which to renew, the needs of low-income people should not be lost.
- President Obama and others have created a national goal of ending childhood hunger in the United States by 2015. They have also said that one way to do that is to increase income for low-wage workers through programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit.
- In 2005, the Earned Income Tax Credit alone lifted more than 5 million people over the poverty line, including 2.6 million children. But we can and must do more.

Sample Letter

Date _____

Dear Rep. _____ or Dear Sen. _____,

Our nation needs a bold, comprehensive strategy to end childhood hunger in the United States. It's vital that we make sure low-income families can meet their basic needs—including food. I ask you to protect and strengthen key tax credits that can make a big difference for low-income workers and their families.

These programs work. In 2005, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) alone lifted more than 5 million people above the poverty line, including 2.6 million children. But we can and must do more. Nearly one in four children lives in a family that struggles to put food on the table. We need to protect and strengthen EITC and the Child Tax Credit and work toward a day when no parent has to send a child to bed hungry.

Sincerely,
Your Name
Your Address

4. Send your letter to Congress.

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

Sen. _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Rep. _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

PLEASE NOTE: The most recent sample letter is always available online at www.bread.org/OL2010. Please visit that site before holding your Offering of Letters.

Due to security procedures, your letter may take two to four weeks to get to Congress, but that's okay. It will make an important difference for people who are hungry and poor.