

TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS TO PARLIAMENTARIANS

Starting your letter...

- Address the Parliamentarian correctly (Dear Senator, Dear Mr Smith)
- Start with an attention catching sentence. It makes people want to read more. Even put in a catchy heading.
- Share your passion, concerns and make it personal by including something relevant about yourself or your family

Content...

- Keep your letter brief – preferably one page or less.
- Be respectful in the tone of your letter. No-one likes to receive unpleasant mail and remember, you are asking this person to help you end hunger and poverty.
- If appropriate, respond to:
 - A recent press article (include a copy if possible),
 - A letter received from the Parliamentarian
 - A speech they have made on the issue.
- Be clear about the point(s) you want to communicate. Use the least amount of information necessary, and only what directly supports your case. Bullet points can be effective.

Concluding your letter...

- Use a concluding paragraph that calls for a specific action or asks one or two questions only. If you are asking the Parliamentarian to write to a Minister on your behalf, ask for a copy of the Minister's response.
- Sign the letter in your usual signature and print your name, address, work and home telephone numbers. The Parliamentarian's office may want to contact you about your letter.

Remember ...

- Typing your letter *does* make it easier to read (especially for someone in a hurry!). Legible handwriting *is* however more personal.
- Keep a copy of your letter in your file.
- As a general rule, expect a reply within 4-6 weeks. You may call the MP's office after 2-3 weeks to check your letter has been received.
- Share your reply with your group and follow up if any further action from the response is required.