

WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

How to make world-changing headlines in your community

Submit a “Letter to the Editor” to get the attention of your community and your members of Congress about important issues that impact the world’s poor and how we can help make a difference. Newspapers will often run pieces written by grassroots activists, especially if the article is well-written, timely, and has a local angle. However, you should check with your newspaper before submitting your letter, as different papers often have unique guidelines for submissions from community members.

Here are a few tips for writing your letter to the editor:

- **Keep it short.** A letter to the editor should be 200-300 words.
- **Make it locally relevant.** Newspapers publish information they believe is pertinent to their readers, so your piece is more likely to be published when it is tied to a current, local event, or targets local leaders (for example, when it responds to the actions—or lack thereof—of your member of Congress).
- **Make it personal.** While your letter should include facts about the issue, it should also reflect your personality. Explain why the subject is relevant to the writer and the reader.
- **Learn from other published pieces.** Check out these examples of letters to the editor on U.S. budget cuts to foreign assistance in [the Chicago Tribune](#) and [the Austin Statesman](#) (it’s the third one down).

Don’t forget to add your first & last name, your title/World Vision Advocate, and your city when you submit. The editor will send you a note to let you know if they’re going to run your letter or if they have any questions or edits.

ARE YOU READY TO GET STARTED?

Read on for a draft letter you can personalize about hunger and the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act. If you have any questions, contact Cassie Paulsen at cpaulsen@worldvision.org.

DRAFT LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Topic: Hunger and the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act

The key to a great letter to the editor is making it personal and locally relevant. Start by looking at your local paper to find an article or opinion piece within the last two days that is related to your topic. Reference that article as you begin your letter to the editor, or start by sharing how you are personally connected to the topic. Choose from the talking points for the body of your letter. Finish by referencing the legislation and asking your members of Congress for support. Remember to keep the length between 200-300 words (or what your local paper requires).

Introduction Examples:

- [Author's] recent article on our local school lunches reminds me how blessed my children are to grow up with access to a nutritious meal. Even though there is enough food in the world for every child, nearly 2.7 million children under the age of five die each year from malnutrition. We can change this.

Talking Points:

- Did you know that [academic institution or company with HQ in your state] partners with the U.S. government to end hunger around the world? ([Click here to see if any of your local businesses or universities partner with Feed the Future](#)).
- What do sweet potatoes, fish, pumpkins, kidney beans, and milk have in common? These foods are at the forefront of ending hunger and malnutrition around the world.
- Through a U.S.-funded program called Feed the Future, non-profits, the private sector, and academic institutions partner with twelve developing countries to strengthen their food and agriculture systems. They connect local farmers with improved agricultural technology and markets, while also providing nutritious food for their community.
- Since Feed the Future began in 2011, nine million more people are living above the poverty line, and 1.8 million more children are free from stunting that is caused by malnutrition in these twelve countries.
- One nutrient-packed sweet potato at a time, the U.S. is changing the futures of hungry kids around the world.
- You can find other facts about hunger on our helpful infographic, [here](#).

Closing:

- Right now, Congress has an opportunity to continue the progress we've made in these twelve countries – and make these programs even more effective and efficient. But they might miss it if they don't hear from constituents like us.
- Join me in calling on [Senator XX and Senator XX] to cosponsor the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act (S. 2269). Let's continue U.S. leadership in giving all children nutritious, healthy futures and making hunger a thing of the past.
- End the letter with your first & last name, your title/World Vision Advocate, and your city.