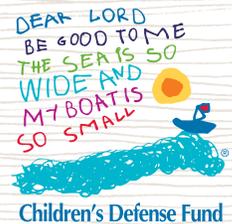


Steer the Next Congress to Focus on All Children

Help CDF generate 5,000 letters to Members of Congress urging them to cover all children!



In March 2009, Congress will decide whether or not millions of children in America have the health coverage they need to reach their God-given potential in life and school. With **nearly 9 million children still uninsured, NOW is the time for people of faith to engage in the prophetic work to guarantee comprehensive health coverage for all children and pregnant women!**

As part of the National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® celebration, we encourage you to **organize a letter-writing campaign** in your faith community. **Our goal is to generate 5,000 letters by February 1, 2009.**

Consider these steps when organizing a letter-writing campaign:

Step 1: Secure the support of the religious leaders of your faith community.

Step 2: Schedule a date. The date of your campaign should be a follow-up to your National Observance of Children's Sabbaths celebration. Schedule your date after the elections on November 4, 2008, so that you can address your letters to the appropriate lawmakers representing you in the next Congress. **Visit www.congressmerge.com to find the names of your elected officials.**

Step 3: Promote the letter-writing campaign through bulletin inserts, message boards and announcements from speakers. Create a buzz among members of your faith community, encouraging them to **step forward and take action for all children.**

Step 4: Make sure you have all the supplies you need for people to write letters and ask each person to write three letters—one to their Congressperson and the others to the two Senators that represent them. Provide the sample letter (found on the next page) to each person writing a letter.

Encourage participants by letting them know that, next to office visits, personalized letters are the most effective way to communicate with Congress. Also, let participants know that they are part of a larger movement as hundreds of faith communities across the country will be participating in similar letter-writing events as a follow-up to their Children's Sabbaths celebrations.

Step 5: Collect the signed letters and send them back to the Children's Defense Fund. We will combine your letters with others from your state and Congressional district and deliver them all at once.

Letters can be collected and mailed to:

Religious Action Division
Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street, NW
Washington, DC, 20001

Thank you for organizing this critical campaign to improve the lives of children! If you need assistance or additional resources, please contact CDF's Religious Action Division at (202) 662-3641.

Sample Letter to Members of Congress

DEAR SENATOR CLARK,

MY NAME IS TIM JOHNSON. I AM A CONSTITUENT LIVING IN SPRINGFIELD AND A MEMBER OF THE UNITED CONGREGATION OF SPRINGFIELD.

RECENTLY MY CHURCH BROUGHT ATTENTION TO THE NEARLY 9 MILLION CHILDREN IN AMERICA LIVING WITHOUT HEALTH COVERAGE. THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT TO ME BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE OUR NATION'S GREATEST INVESTMENT AND POOR HEALTH PREVENTS CHILDREN FROM REACHING THEIR FULL POTENTIAL AND ROBS AMERICA OF ITS FUTURE.

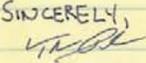
A NEIGHBOR, AND CLOSE FRIEND, WORKS HARD BUT STILL STRUGGLES TO AFFORD HEALTH COVERAGE FOR HIS FAMILY. WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HE WILL BE ABLE TO AFFORD THE HEALTH COVERAGE HIS CHILDREN NEED SHOULD NOT BE A CONCERN THAT HE OR ANY OTHER AMERICAN HAS TO FACE IN OUR NATION TODAY.

AS A MEMBER OF THE NEXT CONGRESS, I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT AND PASS CHILDREN'S HEALTH COVERAGE LEGISLATION THAT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) AFFORDABLE COVERAGE FOR EVERY CHILD AND PREGNANT WOMAN
- 2) COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS
- 3) SIMPLE ENROLLMENT AND RECERTIFICATION PROCESSES
- 4) ENSURED REAL ACCESS TO SERVICES

IN MARCH 2009, CONGRESS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COVER EVERY CHILD. DON'T WASTE THIS OPPORTUNITY. NOW IS THE TIME TO STEP FORWARD FOR ALL CHILDREN. I AM COUNTING ON YOU.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE. I LOOK FORWARD TO A REPLY FROM YOUR OFFICE.

SINCERELY,


TIM JOHNSON
1800 HEALTHYCHILD LANE, SPRINGFIELD

Step 1: Let your elected officials know **who you are, where you are from,** and the **name of the organization** in which you are a member or leader.

Step 2: State the problem: **There are nearly nine million children in America without comprehensive health coverage.**

Let your elected officials know that this is an issue that is important to you:
"This is important to me because..."

Step 3: Include a personal story. If you know of a child or family that has been affected by being uninsured or underinsured, share their story with your lawmakers.

Step 4: Ask your elected officials, as members of the next Congress, to only support health coverage legislation that includes the following:

- Affordable coverage for every child and pregnant woman
- Comprehensive benefits
- Simple enrollment and recertification processes
- Ensured real access to services

Step 5: Let your elected officials know that the opportunity to provide every child and pregnant woman with health coverage is on the Congressional calendar in March 2009, and that you are counting on them to be a leader for children's health.

Step 6: Thank your Congressional members. Let them know that you will be following up to discuss what they can do to ensure health coverage for every child and pregnant woman.

Be sure to sign your letter and to include your address, phone number and title if applicable.