#WorthThePenny Toolkit

From March 20 to 24, CARE Action is pulling out all the stops. We're teaming up with advocacy groups and NGOs from around the country and across the political spectrum to take a stand for the world's poor. We're asking every one of our advocates to write, call, tweet at and visit your Members of Congress to tell them that fighting poverty and providing humanitarian assistance for the world's must vulnerable citizens is #WorthThePenny.

Here's what's in your #WorthThePenny toolkit:
- The Back story
- How to call your Representatives script
- Sample Letter To The Editor
- Sign the Petition
- Sample Social Media posts

The Back Story

On March 16, 2017, the Trump Administration released its budget request for FY 2018 with proposed funding cuts as high as 31% for the State Department, USAID, and humanitarian and development assistance for poor countries.

The entire foreign assistance budget comes to just one penny out of every U.S. budget dollar – 1% of the total budget. CARE and the humanitarian community agree that these requests are dangerous and a direct departure from the values and leadership America has always represented. Without American funding and assistance much of the progress we've made to eradicate extreme poverty could be wiped away and countless lives put at risk. We can't let that happen. We're counting on you to help us.

This budget isn't law yet and only Congress can approve or reject it. We need your help to urge our Representatives and Senators to reject these dangerous cuts. That's what this week of mobilization is about. We're flooding Congress with calls, posts and letters and telling the world that foreign assistance is #WorthThePenny.

To learn more about what the foreign assistance budget does, click here. Then, get ready to advocate with everything you've got.

Call your Representatives

Calling your Congressperson or Senator is easier and more effective than you think. Here's how it goes:

- **Find your Representatives and Senators** and their contact information at WhoIsMyRepresentative.com. [Note: You have one Representative and two Senators. Call all three!]

- **Plan your message.**   Keep it short and to the point. You likely won't be speaking directly with your Representative and Senators. Instead, you'll speak with a staff member or your call will go to voicemail (Yes! Leave a message if that's the only option!). Make sure to ask for a written response, that's the best way to know where your Representative and Senators stand on the issue.

  Say something like this:

  Hi, my name is_____ and I live in _____.

  I'm a constituent of the Senator/Congressperson and a supporter of CARE. I'm calling about President Trump's budget request to cut funding for foreign assistance.

  I strongly urge Senator/Representative _____ to oppose these drastic and disproportionate cuts and support a strong international affairs budget of at least $60 billion to fund critical, life-saving foreign assistance programs to any country in need. This dollar amount matches current funding levels and reflects the growing need for humanitarian assistance around the world.

  I would like to receive a written response to my comment. My address is ____

- **Done!** Now that you know how easy it is, get your friends, family and co-workers to call in too.

Send a Letter to the Editor

You'll find the opinion editor's name and contact information for your print or online news source on their website.   Letters to the Editor are short (less than 200 words) and generally connect with a current event or recently published article. Write something like this:

Dear Editor,

In light of President Trump's budget that proposes cuts of over 30 percent for U.S. foreign assistance, it's no surprise that those of us who work with [CARE](), a leading global poverty-fighting organization, are concerned - not just by the harm this budget would do - but also by gross misperceptions people hold about how much we actually spend abroad and what these programs mean for America.

Most Americans think we spend 10, 20 even 30 percent of the total U.S. budget on foreign assistance. They're wrong. It's only one percent. One penny on the dollar. Even more important, this one percent covers some of America's most effective national security programs like supporting and protecting our embassies, responding to emergencies and assisting in development to help poor countries become self-sufficient. That's a lot of life-saving, friend-making, stability-creating power for a measly one percent.

We're making progress in the poorest communities on earth, which, not coincidentally, are also among the most politically unstable places on earth. Our modest investments in education, health care, sanitation, and financial services are enabling people in impoverished countries to become independent, survive after emergencies, rebuild their lives stronger than ever and bring security, prosperity and opportunities to parts of the world where they're needed most. That's why congressional leaders of both parties, and especially military commanders, agree that foreign assistance is among the best investments our government can make.

America needs to know the facts and tell Congress: if you want to demonstrate American greatness, then a robust foreign assistance budget must be a top priority. I urge Representative X and Senators Y and Z to support and defend the foreign assistance budget.

Name, City/Town

Sign Our Petition

You can could also help us flood congressional offices with letters by signing our petition by clicking [here]().

Flood Social Media
Fill your social media platforms with messages that oppose budget cuts and support full funding of the foreign assistance budget. Don't forget to check your Representative's and Senators' web sites and social media feeds to see what they're saying about the foreign assistance budget – if they've spoken up in support of this funding, thank them!

Sample Tweets: Tag your Member of Congress and @CAREActionNow and use the hashtag #WorthThePenny.

.@YourCongressperson I support @CAREActionow in standing up for foreign assistance. Will you join me? #WorthThePenny

.@YourCongressperson Help save lives, join @CAREActionNow and protect America's humanitarian programs from severe cuts. #WorthThePenny

.@YourCongressperson 1% of the federal budget saves countless lives. Join @CAREActionNow and support humanitarian assistance. #WorthThePenny

Facebook – Be sure you tag your Member of Congress, CAREAction and include CARE's #WorthThePenny hashtag.

Don't let Congress pass President Trump's budget request to cut funding for humanitarian assistance by a third and withdraw poverty-fighting programs for the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries. That's not what America stands for. #WorthThePenny
http://bit.ly/2mEpAdX

The US International Affairs Budget is only one percent of the total Federal Budget but that penny on the dollar saves millions of lives and positions America as a global leader. Don't let Congress pass President Trump's budget. #WorthThePenny http://bit.ly/2mX46eS

5. Get Creative

If you have ideas for how we can spread the word that nternational humanitarian and development assistance is #WorthThePenny – TELL US! Here are a couple ideas we've heard recently that you're welcome to copy:

- Collect pennies at your workplace, school or place of worship to represent the single penny on the dollar that represents the entire foreign affairs budget. Then, donate proceeds to CARE.

- Stop by your Member of Congress's in-district offices and drop off a penny with a note that says: The International Affairs Budget is only one percent of the federal budget – one penny out of the budget dollar. We at CARE Action think it's #WorthThePenny.

We're in this together and we know we can count on you to dial up the heat this week. Let us know how we can help you spread the word and be sure and post your ideas, successes, questions and concerns on our Facebook page or tweet us @CAREActionNow