

REACH YOUR COMMUNITY

Another way to reach your members of Congress, while expanding your delegation, is through your local media.

Local newspapers accept opinion submissions (Op-Eds) and Letters to the Editor. Guidelines for submissions are usually found on the newspaper's website. A letter to the editor should be around **250 words in length**, referencing a story or column that appeared in that specific newspaper. A letter to the editor should either make a new point or counterpoint with the article's premise, followed by a suggested action. **Be sure to save any clippings that appear in your local newspapers and send copies to your members of Congress and [Regional Advocacy Coordinator](#).**

TIPS AND TRICKS

- **Understand the purpose of an LTE.** LTE's are quick to write, relatively easy to have published, and appear in the most widely read section of the paper: the editorial page. Politicians and government agencies routinely clip and circulate letters to the editor as an indicator of what is important to their constituents. You enhance your chance of getting a letter published if your thoughts and ideas add some new angle or element to the public debate on a story or issue, or you respond to something that was published in the paper. LTE's should be around 250 words. See #5 for more tips on writing an LTE.
- **Learn the issue.** Familiarize yourself with CARE's issues and talking points and ensure your LTE is accurate before submitting.
- **Find your angle.** The more tailored, local and timely you are, the higher your chances for success.
- **Get inspired.** See our sample template and look for other examples that have already been placed in your local or national papers.
- **Dive in!** Follow these step-by-step guidelines for LTE's.
 - Be current (make sure there is a "hook")
 - Check the LTE page of your newspaper or its website for the guidelines and logistics for submitting a letter.
 - Mention CARE!
 - Make a call-to-action on the foreign assistance budget and encourage members of Congress to support robust funding.
 - Add compelling stats

Success? Send your LTE's to your member(s) of Congress, promote it on social media and share it with your community, CARE staff and your fellow advocates!

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

U.S. foreign assistance accounts for only one percent of the federal budget, yet this tiny investment benefits every citizen on earth. Both the Trump Administration and some in Congress have proposed steep cuts to foreign assistance in the FY19 budget, which would cripple U.S. humanitarian and development work and create massive job losses. Global conflicts will intensify along with threats to our national security, economic stability and global health.

As a citizen advocate for the leading humanitarian organization CARE, I'm urging Congress to protect and sustain current (FY17) foreign assistance funding for FY19. CARE also urges Congress to conduct strong oversight over any government reorganization or proposed cuts to USAID personnel. Congress must approve a budget that protects lives, supports global security and maintains our nation's standing in the world.

Join me in telling Congress that Americans and millions around the world are grateful for their support for a robust U.S. foreign assistance budget.

Signature