

Sample Letter from Businesses

The Honorable [First name Last name]
[Address]
Washington, DC 20510

BY FAX: [Fax number]

ATTENTION: [Staff member]

Dear Senator [Last name]:

[Brief introduction and description of company along with constituent relationship if applicable.] I am writing to you today to urge you to ensure that foreign aid funding for safe drinking water and sanitation in developing countries reaches those in need, by strengthening the statutory language of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill and increasing funding for long-term, sustainable projects.

Lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation is one of the world's most pressing public health problems. A child dies from water-borne illness every fifteen seconds. Diseases related to unclean water kill between three and five million people each year, and cause an estimated 80 percent of all sicknesses in the developing world. [In addition to the humanitarian toll, this issue directly affects [my company] because [it prevents economic development in key areas] [competition for water is leading to violence and political instability in key areas] [my company depends on people having access to clean water] [water is necessary in order to ensure proper treatment of diseases].]

There is tremendous momentum behind the effort to solve this problem. In 2005, Congress passed the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act (P.L. 109-121), which made safe water and sanitation in the developing world an official U.S. foreign policy goal. The Water for the Poor Act led to \$200 million in funding for safe drinking water and sanitation in each of the last two years. This year, the House of Representatives has increased that amount to \$300 million in the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill.

In order to fully realize the benefit of this new funding, it is necessary to include strong statutory language requiring that this money be spent to implement the Water for the Poor Act. Only a reference to the Water for the Poor Act in the bill itself will guarantee that the funding goes to new, sustainable projects that fulfill the promise of that landmark legislation. In addition, we challenge the Senate to further increase funding for safe drinking water and sanitation above the amount that the House has set; as much as \$500 million could be used effectively right now.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

[Name and title – and address if constituent]