

# WRITING LETTERS

## WRITING LETTERS FOR FREEDOM FROM DEBT

Letter writing is one of the easiest and most effective methods of campaigning for debt cancellation. It shows decision-makers and elected officials that we care enough to sit down, think about the issue and contact them.

Don't underestimate the power of a handwritten letter - it can have a huge impact! Many decision-makers calculate that every handwritten letter they receive represents 100 who support the cause and 1,000 who rate it as very important.

Because letter writing is so easy, it has been perceived by some as boring or just for beginners. Not so! Letter writing is for everyone.

### LETTER WRITING FUN

- host a dinner party to educate friends and community members about the debt crisis and then write letters together
- write letters on personal stationery, greeting or seasonal cards; they are more fun to write and more fun for the decision-makers to open
- include news clippings about debt or Jubilee, especially letters to the editor or opinion pieces from your local newspapers, or a picture of yourself as a personal touch
- start or end your Jubilee coalition meeting with letter writing
- if you practice a regular prayer life, consider writing letters as part of your prayer routine, pray that your words fall on the hearts of our elected officials
- organize a letter writing table at your congregation, campus or community group - Encourage everyone to join in!

### WHEN CAN YOU WRITE LETTERS?

- write letters in the bath tub
- write letters on the bus or train
- write letters on your lunch break
- pick a sunny cafe on a weekend afternoon to write letters
- invite friends to a letter-writing happy hour at your local pub
- stuck waiting in the doctor's office or for a friend? Use the time to write a letter.

Really any place and any time is good to lift your voice and call for freedom from debt for millions around the world. It's a way to express yourself!

### RULES TO HELP GET YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS:

- start by thanking the decision maker for steps taken in the past this positive feedback can not be underestimated
- express two or three points only
- be polite and positive wherever possible
- state what you want the recipient to do
- mention your connection to a faith community or organizational affiliations
- let your Member of Congress know if you voted for them
- always include your full name and address
- ask for a reply
- handwrite your letters

## SAMPLE LETTER

Please look on the Jubilee USA website, [www.jubileeusa.org](http://www.jubileeusa.org), or call the national Jubilee office for the most current requests for letter writing. Use the generic letter below to get you started.

Dear —

I am writing to ask for your support for definitive debt cancellation for the world's impoverished countries.

Thank you for your past support of debt cancellation. Some debt relief has been given, and it is working wonders in places like Uganda, Mozambique and Honduras where savings from debt have been used to increase school enrollment and provide life saving medicines to dying people.

However, debt relief has not gone far enough. Half of African countries continue to spend more on debt than on health. Many countries have had debt relief delayed or do not qualify based on current criteria. We need to do more. Please support deeper and broader debt cancellation at every opportunity.

I would also like you to advocate for an end to harmful World Bank and IMF conditions that prevent poor people from having access to clean water, health care, adequate education or good jobs.

Complete debt cancellation is needed for the fight against HIV/AIDS and to ensure global security through poverty eradication. I look forward to working with you to resolve this pressing moral issue. Please send me a response detailing your views.

Sincerely,

Your name

Your full address

Jubilee USA Network

## READ THE REPLIES!

Feel free to respond to their reply. Make sure to share the responses with the Jubilee office.

## WHO NEEDS TO HEAR FROM YOU?

### Members of Congress

Some Members of Congress are still having a delay in receiving their mail. Consider also sending your letter as a handwritten fax, email or making a phone call to the staff person that works on debt. Or you can send letters to the district offices and ask that they be passed onto the appropriate Washington staff person. See contact info below.

Representative --

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Senator --

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) to find out who your Representative or Senator is and learn their contact information.

### Other Decision Makers

The President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Secretary of the Treasury  
US Treasury Department  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20220

The Treasury Department is the part of the Administration that works on World Bank and IMF issues, including debt cancellation. They are very influential in setting policies at the World Bank and IMF.

Managing Director  
International Monetary Fund  
700 19th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20433

President of the World Bank  
World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20433