Top 10 Tips for Writing your Member of Congress (MOC)

Write a letter that focuses on an issue that is most important to you.

**Be clear:** Make sure to include the issue of importance in the subject line of the email and first few sentences of the letter. Remember to focus on the issue that is most important to you.

**Inform:** Tell your MOC that you are a constituent, share your perspective and be sure to use your knowledge and facts about your issue to support your perspective. You may want to cite the bill number of legislation that is related to your issue. (e.g., H.R. 2408)

**Inquire:** Ask your policymaker to share their position on legislation related to your issue. For example, you may ask how do they plan to vote on the bill. You will get different responses, depending on the office of the MOC.

**Use evidence & personal story:** You should have research and facts to support your position on the issue, but you also should include your personal story and why this particular issue matters to you. Always be polite and never demean or insult.

**Be constructive:** When you bring up an issue, it is helpful to the MOC to offer recommendations or actions that the MOC can take to address the issue. For example, you might ask your MOC to support a particular bill that relates to the issue.

**Be precise:** Explain how this issue affects your hometown and your life. Use specific examples, include dates or times if possible and write in the first person.

**Be helpful:** Always share your contact information and be willing to share additional information with your MOC, if required.

**Thank them:** Always thank your MOC for their time and consideration. If your MOC has supported your issue in the past, thank them for that specifically.

**Follow up:** Always follow up with your MOC to see if they have taken any action in support of your issue and thank them again. Following up helps to build relationships with staffers and MOC.

**Concise:** Keep your email or letter short and sweet. 500 words or less is ideal.

**Adapted from:** http://www.apa.org/advocacy/guide/letter-email.aspx
SAMPLE LETTER TO A MOC

[Date]

[Name of Senator or Name of Representative]

[U.S. Senate/ U.S. House of Representatives]

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear [Senator/U.S. Representative Name],

I am a constituent and a youth leader for She’s the First, which is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) that fights gender inequality through education. As a young person, I care deeply about girls’ education because [insert your personal story]. I strongly encourage you to support strong funding for global education in current and upcoming fiscal years.

Globally, 263 million children are out of school. In addition [elaborate on the importance of education and significant facts and statistics], Girls around the world face special barriers when accessing school. Some barriers may include lack of sanitation and hygiene facilities in school, lack of female teachers, unsafe journeys to school and gender discrimination.

Improving access to quality education can:

- Improve the economy: Research shows that an additional year of education can increase woman’s potential to earn by 15%.
- Reduce maternal death: Research shows that maternal deaths would be reduced by two-thirds if all mothers achieved a secondary education.
- Decrease child marriage: Every year of secondary education reduces the chances of a child being forced to marry by at least 5%.
- Reduce childhood death: Research shows that children of mothers who are literate are 50% more likely to live beyond the age of five.
- Reduce conflict: Risk of being involved in conflict decreases by 20% for every additional year that a young boy receives a quality education.

Providing access to quality education for girls and all children will help us build a stronger, more secure, healthier, and prosperous future. As you look ahead to the Fiscal Year 2020 spending bills, I urge you to support international basic education by allocating $800 million to basic education bilateral programming, $125 million for the Global Partnership for Education, and at least $21 million for the Education Cannot Wait Fund in the Fiscal Year 2020 State and Foreign Operations Bill.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]