

Lobbying 101

Contacting Congress about Liberian Legislation

Contacting your Congressional Representatives

- Everyone in the U.S. is represented in Congress by two senators and one member of the House of Representatives.
- To find the name of your senators and representative, go to <http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml> or call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121.
- You can contact your representatives by telephone or in writing.
- Both citizens and non-citizens can contact Congressmen. *As long as you live in their district, they represent you.*

Calling your Congressional Representatives

- To find your elected officials' phone numbers call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your senators' and/or representative's office. The Switchboard will connect your call.

Tips on talking to your Congressional Representatives

- Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. *Ask to speak with the person who handles immigration issues.*
- After identifying yourself, tell the person you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support S.656/H.R.1941. I urge Senator/Representative (Name) to support this legislation and the continued protection of Liberians."
- Give reasons for your support of the bill. Ask for your senators' or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

Writing to your Senator

- You can also write letters to your representatives. If you are writing to your Senator, address your correspondence like this:

The Honorable [Full Name]
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Last Name],

Writing to your Representative

- If you are writing to your Representative in the House, address your correspondence like this:

The Honorable [Full Name]
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. [Last Name],

Tips on writing to your Congressional Representatives

- State that you are writing in support of S.656/H.R.1941 and the continued protection of Liberians. Give reasons why you support the bill.
- Be sure to sign your letter. Print your name, address, and phone number so it is clear you are a constituent.

General Guidelines for Lobbying

- Individuals as well as organizations can lobby to members of Congress.
- Guidelines and tips can be found on the website of the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest, cpi.org.
- There are limitations on the amount of funding and resources that 501(c)(3) organizations can devote to lobbying, so be sure to follow the regulations.