

# *Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated*

*A Public Service Sorority Founded in 1913*

---

1707 New Hampshire Avenue N.W. ▲ Washington, DC 20009 ▲ (202) 986-2400 ▲ Telefax (202) 986-2513

---

## **DELTA SIGMA THETA CALL FOR ACTION: HAITIAN FOOD CRISIS**

Dear Sorors:

Over the last few weeks, we have been horrified with images in the news of the increasingly dire situation in the country of Haiti where millions of families cannot afford a basic life necessity, food. In a country where more than half the population of 9 million lives on less than a \$1 a day, the price of food has risen drastically in the last few days and families have resorted to eating mud pies to avoid starvation. Amid the chaos and turmoil that have come as a result of rising food cost, children have been forced to experience what is widely known in Haiti as “Clorox hunger,” a hunger so strong that it feels like the stomach is being eaten by bleach. I ask you to contact your congressional representative and implore them to respond immediately to the needs of the millions of Haitian children that face this harrowing existence by:

- Providing emergency funding to the United Nation’s World Food Program specifically for Haitian relief;
- Granting United States Temporary Protected Status to Haitian immigrants through the passage of H.R. 522 (sponsored by Representative Alcee L. Hastings); and
- Encouraging the expedition of Haiti’s debt cancellation (Jubilee Act) so that much needed funds can be directed to the immediate needs of the Haitian people.

Due to the lengthy mail screening process of Congress, it is helpful to fax a copy of legislative correspondence. Fax numbers, telephone numbers and addresses for legislators are available at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). An abridged version of the Delta Sigma Theta Social Action Worktool, including a sample letter, is attached to assist you in formulating your correspondence with your legislators. Sorors or chapters with questions regarding this matter can contact Candi Mundon, Public Policy Specialist, at 202-986-2400 ext. 557 or [cmundon@deltasigmatheta.org](mailto:cmundon@deltasigmatheta.org).

Continuing the legacy of our Founders, whose first public act was participation in the Women’s Suffrage March of 1913, we must remain committed to being agents of change for disenfranchised people. As you know, the sorority makes its official position on public policy issues via resolutions approved by the grand chapter at its biennial convention. The sorority has previously adopted resolutions in 1992 and 2002 regarding the status of Haitian children and immigrants and continues its commitment to international awareness and involvement through various programs and efforts.

Sincerely,



Louise A. Rice, Ph.D.  
National President

# DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.

## SOCIAL ACTION WORKTOOL: HOW TO WRITE A LEGISLATIVE LETTER (ABRIDGED)



### NATIONAL SOCIAL ACTION COMMISSION

---

Marcia L. Fudge, Esq. Co-Chair  
Mary D. Redd, Co-Chair

# HOW TO WRITE LEGISLATIVE LETTERS

---

Letters are used by elected officials to gauge interest in an issue. Therefore, it is important that you correspond with them to apprise them of your views on issues of concern to Delta, your community, and you as a constituent. Due to the lengthy mail screening process of Congress, it is helpful to fax a copy of legislative correspondence. Fax numbers and addresses for legislators are available at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). The following are tips for writing personal, thoughtful, specific and concise letters:

- Spell your legislator's name correctly. Know his/her proper title -- e.g., Senator or Representative. All elected officials should be addressed as "Honorable."
- Write as a constituent. Use personal stationery rather than a postcard or form letter.
- Write one page or less. If you have more information than will fit on one page, include it as an attachment. Limit attachments to a few pages.
- Cover only one subject or issue per letter. It is acceptable to write on two issues related to the same topic. For example, a request to support a bill addressing school construction funding could be included in a letter requesting support for a bill to increase funding to reduce class size.
- Be as specific as possible. If you are writing regarding legislation, refer to the title and/or number of the bill.
- Make sure your letter is timely. It should arrive while the issue is alive. You can find information on the status of legislation on the web site of the lawmaking body or an advocacy group that is closely monitoring the issue.
- Request specific action by your elected official, e.g., vote for or against a bill.
- Request a reply. Be advised that elected officials who do not represent you are not likely to respond to your letter. They might refer your correspondence to your elected representative.
- Include your name and address on the letter. It is important that you include your address as it indicates that you are a constituent.
- Type your letter if possible, or write legibly.
- Check with your legislator's office before sending letters via e-mail to find out how the office processes correspondence sent by electronic mail.
- Write each legislator individually. Avoid copies and form letters.
- Inform your legislator that you will continue monitoring his/her action on the issue.

# **SAMPLE FORMAT OF LETTER TO A LEGISLATOR**

---

Date

The Honorable (first and last names) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Office Address)

RE: (Refer to the bill number and/or title)

Dear (title) (last name):

## **Introduction**

### Purpose of Letter

- Identify yourself as a registered voter/constituent
- Request action on the legislation

## **Body**

(Limit to 2 or 3 points)

### Rationale/Supporting data

- Findings of authoritative entities
- Reports by government organizations, advocacy groups or scholars

## **Closing**

Thank the legislator for his/her time and consideration of your views.

Request a timely reply.

Remind legislator that you will continue monitoring the issue.

Sincerely,

(signature)

Your name, printed  
Complete mailing address

---

---

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: HAITIAN FOOD CRISIS**

Dear Congressman/woman \_\_\_\_\_:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a registered and active voter in \_\_\_\_\_ district/state. I write to request your support for initiatives that will assist the people of Haiti as they are faced with an increasingly dire food crisis. In a country where more than half the population of 9 million lives on less than a \$1 a day, the price of food has risen drastically in the last few days and families have resorted to eating mud pies to avoid starvation. Amid the chaos and turmoil that have come as a result of rising food cost, children have been forced to experience what is widely known in Haiti as “Clorox hunger,” a hunger so strong that it feels like the stomach is being eaten by bleach. I ask that you support the following initiatives to provide much needed relief to the women and children of Haiti.

- Provide emergency funding to the United Nation’s World Food Program specifically for Haitian relief;
- Grant United States Temporary Protected Status to Haitian immigrants through the passage of H.R. 522 (sponsored by Representative Alcee L. Hastings); and
- Encourage the expedition of Haiti’s debt cancellation (H.R. 2634, Jubilee Act) so that much needed funds can be directed to the immediate needs of the Haitian people.

I trust that you will give serious consideration to my views and support these initiatives. As I continue to monitor this situation, I look forward to hearing your position on these issues.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HOW TO ADDRESS ELECTED OFFICIALS

---

The proper forms of address and salutation for various officials are listed below. All letters should contain your name, signature, and address.

| <b>Position</b>     | <b>Mail</b>   | <b>Salutation</b>  | <b>Conversation</b>  |
|---------------------|---|--|--|
| President           | President of the United States<br>The White House<br>Washington, DC 20050           | Dear Mr. President:  | Mr. President  |
| Vice President      | Vice President of the United States<br>United States Senate<br>Washington, DC 20050 | Dear Mr. Vice President:   | Mr. Vice President   |
| U.S. Senator        | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Senator...  | Senator...   |
| U.S. Representative | The Honorable (full name)<br>U.S. House of Representatives                          | Dear Congressman/<br>Congresswoman...                                      | Congressman/<br>Congresswoman...                                 |
| Governor            | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Governor...   | Governor...  |
| Lt. Governor        | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Lt. Governor...   | Lt. Governor...  |
| State Senator       | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Senator...  | Senator...   |
| State Delegates     | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Delegate...   | Delegate...  |
| Mayor               | The Honorable (full name)<br>Mayor of (city name)                                   | Dear Mayor...  | Mayor...   |
| City Council        | The Honorable (full name)   | Dear Councilman/<br>Councilwoman...<br><br>Dear Alderman/<br>Alderwoman... | Councilman/<br>Councilwoman...<br><br>Alderman/<br>Alderwoman... |