

SAMPLE LETTER TO U.S. SENATE
RE: RIF's 2005 "Dear Colleague" Letter

Important: Please do not copy this letter word for word. Try to rewrite even the introductory and closing paragraphs below. Form letters are ignored!

Use your own words to the maximum extent possible.

[Date]

The Honorable [Jane Doe]
United States Senate
[100 Dirksen Senate Office Building]
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Doe]:

I write to ask your support for increased funding, in fiscal year 2006, for Reading Is Fundamental, an important literacy program that serves children and families in [name of community]. The federal funds that RIF receives are critical to our community. Therefore, I hope that you will sign the "Dear Colleague" letter that is being circulated by Senator Elizabeth Dole and Senator Debbie Stabenow, and that asks for \$27 million for FY06 (a mere \$1.7 million increase).

In the next paragraph or two and in your own words:

- Describe your RIF program (how long it has operated, the population it serves, etc.)
- State your position/title (parent, teacher, reading coach, executive director, etc)
- Describe the conditions in your community that make RIF such an important service
- Say why you think your RIF program is important
- Talk about how RIF books impact children and families
- Describe how the children react and feel when they get their RIF books
- Share whether you've noticed improvements in reading scores, motivation, library use, etc.
- Discuss whether the children would have books at home if RIF did not exist
- Talk about how you believe that RIF helps kids become better students and citizens
- Describe an event or occurrence that demonstrates RIF's impact

In closing, I want you to know how important our RIF program is to the children and families in [name of school or community or program]. I would very much appreciate knowing whether you will sign the RIF funding support letter.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to children and families in [name of community]. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

[Full Name]
[Full Address]
[Phone Number]