

SAMPLE LETTER TO U.S. SENATE/HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS MEMBERS
RE: Support of RIF in Labor HHS Appropriations bills

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

[Date]

The Honorable [Name of Congressperson]
United States [Senate/House of Representatives]
[100 Dirksen Senate Office Building]
Washington, DC 20510

Dear [Senator/Representative Last Name]:

I am writing to say thank you for your support of Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill. Members of my community and I appreciate your unwavering dedication to children's literacy not only here in [name of community] but to children and families throughout the country.

Without Congressional support, RIF would be unable to distribute 16 million books annually to the nation's youngest and most at-risk children. This indeed would be devastating to the children in our community as well as the 4.6 million children and their families who receive free books and reading encouragement from RIF programs at nearly 20,000 locations throughout the U.S.

Use your own words in the next paragraph or two:

- Describe your RIF program, if applicable (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

Again, thank you for your support. Please feel free to contact me or Stephen Leach, RIF's Director of Government Relations and Community Outreach, at 202-536-3473 or sleach@rif.org, if you have any questions. Thank you again for your service to children and families in [name of community].

Sincerely yours,

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