

# Congressional Meeting Guide

**Our ASK for members of Congress is:**

- **Support at least \$4.77 billion for Development Assistance for fiscal year (FY) 2025**

## BEFORE THE MEETING

Coordinating meeting roles with your group during our strategy session is essential to ensure you have successful meetings. Make sure each member of the group has one of the following roles:

- **Meeting Leader:** This will be assigned to a constituent of the member of Congress. The meeting leader will kick-off the meeting, ensure the ask is made and send a thank you note after the meeting.
- **Designated Advocate:** This will be an assigned group member who has a specific speaking role during the meeting.
- **Notetaker:** This will be a group member assigned to take notes during the meeting and a picture after the meeting to submit in the Soapbox mobile tool.

## MEETING OUTLINE & TALKING POINTS

This outline will help you have a successful meeting and includes our ask. *Note: you won't have time to make every point—use the talking points as a helpful resource.*

### I. INTRODUCTIONS: WHO YOU ARE AND WHY YOU'RE HERE

#### INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE MEMBER OF CONGRESS OR STAFF (MEETING LEADER)

- **Meeting Leader** opens the meeting by saying why the group is here – to join CARE in fighting global poverty.
- **Meeting Leader** shares where they're from and a very brief connection to the state and/or district (this could be your town, school, faith community, etc.).
  - Thank the member of Congress / staff member for taking time to meet and discuss issues that are important to you and other constituents in your state/district.
  - **TELL YOUR STORY:** Share why development assistance is important to you, using a story to illustrate your point.
  - Ask other participants to introduce themselves (name and hometown only).
  - Invite the member of Congress or staff to introduce themselves.

#### INTRODUCE CARE (DESIGNATED ADVOCATE)

- CARE has fought global poverty for more than 75 years.
- This year, CARE and partners have worked in 111 countries, reaching more than 174 million people through nearly 1,500 projects.
- CARE works to **end** poverty by addressing its **underlying** causes and by putting **women and**

**girls** at the heart of all we do.

- CARE works **alongside** women because evidence shows that when women and girls are empowered, their community thrives.

## II. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BACKGROUND: SET THE STAGE FOR THE CONVERSATION

### INTRODUCE THE ASK (DESIGNATED ADVOCATE)

We're here today to ask you to support at least **\$4.77 billion for Development Assistance in FY2025**.

- Development assistance is a smart investment. It supports the everyday essentials we all need not just to survive but thrive - access to nutritious food and clean water, reliable health care, education, financial tools, and more.
  - Development Assistance, funded through the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, is one way the U.S. invests in global anti-poverty programs.
- It's a down-payment today for peace and global stability by helping to build more resilient communities before crisis strikes.
  - Lifesaving humanitarian assistance is critical for meeting immediate needs, but if we do not pair emergency funding with equal investments in development assistance, we are simply putting a band-aid on an open wound. We know that **every \$1 invested in building resilience saves up to \$7 in future humanitarian response**.
- With a global hunger crisis raging, extreme poverty rising, and extreme weather events affecting all of us, investments in resilient communities are more critical than ever.
  - These challenges are even more dire for women and girls, who have less access to resources and opportunities and face greater risk of violence.
  - Women are responsible for 90% of the work of growing, buying, and preparing food, but when a woman's family faces hardship, **she eats last and least**.
- We cannot end hunger or reduce poverty without prioritizing those most impacted by it: women and girls.
- CARE witnesses the profound difference development assistance makes every day, especially in the lives of women and girls.
  - **In a few sentences, a Global Woman Leader or Designated Advocate shares a story on the local impact of these programs.**
    - Zemzem is a mother, farmer, and entrepreneur in Ethiopia who continues to bounce back from crises like drought and armed conflict again and again.
    - CARE's Livelihoods for Resilience project, which is funded by Development Assistance, helped Zemzem's community set up a savings group.
    - Loans and training from her savings group gave her the confidence and creativity to come up with her own business ideas, including baking bread

- amidst a war.
- Now that she has a steady income, she can send her children to school, buy nutritious food, and even purchase basic health supplies like sanitary pads.
  - Development assistance has helped Zemzem not just survive the numerous shocks her community has faced but come back stronger and more confident than ever.
- The U.S. must continue to invest in strategies that support vulnerable communities around the world.
    - Programs funded by Development Assistance ensure that mothers can watch their children grow and develop in communities that are self-reliant, well-fed, healthy, and democratic.
  - At \$4.77 billion, Development Assistance would equal **1/10th of 1% of the entire federal budget**.
    - This small, but impactful, funding will help promote the economic growth and welfare of developing countries, save lives, defeat poverty, and achieve social justice.

### III. MAKE THE ASK

**“Will [MEMBER OF CONGRESS’ NAME] support no less than \$4.77 billion for Development Assistance for fiscal year 2025?”**

### IV. DISCUSSION

Facilitate discussion with the member or staff, noting questions you cannot answer and requests for additional information so that the CARE staff can follow up.

Example questions:

- *If the office supports our ask:* What are your other international development priorities for this fiscal year?
- *If the office does not commit to supporting our ask:* What are your questions or concerns about increased funding for Development Assistance?

### V. CONCLUSION

- **Constituent** thanks the member of Congress and/or staff for meeting.
- Ask the member of Congress and/or staff to take a picture.
- Tell the member of Congress you hope to meet with them in-district during an upcoming congressional recess.

## **AFTER THE MEETING**

### **PROVIDE MEETING FEEDBACK (NOTETAKER)**

Immediately after each meeting, complete the meeting feedback form in the Soapbox mobile tool at [sboxmobile.com](https://sboxmobile.com). Include meeting details and any required follow-up. These notes will be shared with CARE staff for further follow-up.

### **SEND THANK YOU EMAIL (MEETING LEADER)**

Send a thank you email to the congressional staff you met with by personalizing the below template.

**To:** **[STAFF CONTACT NAME]**

**Subject:** Thank You for Meeting with CARE

#### **Email Body:**

Dear **[STAFF CONTACT NAME]**:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and **[INSERT GROUP MEMBER NAMES]** on July 24 about Fiscal Year 2025 Development Assistance funding.

As a reminder, CARE works to end poverty by addressing its underlying causes and by putting women and girls, and gender equality, at the heart of all we do. I hope you will stand with women and girls around the world by supporting at least \$4.77 billion for Development Assistance for FY2025.

This request will change millions of lives every year, address the root causes of poverty, decrease dependency, and build stronger, more resilient societies.

Thank you again for standing with us to fight poverty, injustice, and discrimination worldwide to create a better, more just tomorrow. Please reach out to me if you have additional questions. I look forward to staying in touch.

Sincerely,  
**[YOUR NAME]**