



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

Washington Office for Advocacy

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Ministerial and/or Social Action Committee Cover Letters to Elected Officials

A cover letter written by a minister and/or social action committee is a sure way to add authority and clout to your cause. Seeing a clergy member or committee's name attached to a project creates a sense of spiritual weight and/or cohesiveness.

A cover letter **should include** the following things:

- The name and size of your congregation or community
- The purpose and goal of your project
- Appeal to love and strength
- A call to action

A letter **should not include** the following things:

- Appeal to fear or guilt
- A lengthy explanation of the project
- In depth background information of the project
- A personal biography

Above all your letter should be:

- Short and to the point (Less than one page)
- Compelling and engaging
- Theologically grounded
- On church letterhead

An example letter might look like the following:

Dear Rep. _____,

Our nation's immigration system is broken. Families are being torn apart by workplace raids, unjust detention practices, and deportations. By leaving twelve million undocumented immigrants without a path to legalization, our nation has created a class of exploitable people who are vulnerable to civil and human rights abuses.

Our 250 member First Unitarian Church of Metropolis is active in offering free English classes to immigrant day laborers and donating food and clothing to the families of immigrants whose primary wage-earner has been detained. Each week, we hear stories about another detention or deportation occurring in our community, and we have witnessed the pain and suffering caused when families are separated.

Last Updated 04/30/2009

This May, our congregation is leading efforts to learn more about immigration issues. In addition to holding movie discussion nights and saying a prayer for immigrants during each worship service, one hundred and sixty of our congregation members signed the enclosed petition in support of H.R. 182, the Child Citizen Protection Act, to share with you.

Every year, nearly 200,000 non-citizens—many with children who are U.S. citizens—are deported and torn away from their families, even when a judge thinks they deserve to stay in the United States. H.R. 182, the Child Citizen Protection Act, would allow immigration judges to take the best interest of citizen children into consideration when evaluating whether an undocumented parent should be forcibly deported.

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), which represents over 1,050 congregations nationwide and with which our congregation is affiliated, has called for immigration reforms that facilitate the reunification of families. At the UUA's 2008 General Assembly, over 500 delegates from congregations across the nation gathered in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, to rally in support of the Child Citizen Protection Act.

If enacted, H.R. 182 could have a significant impact on families comprised of both citizens and non-citizens. We urge you to keep families and communities together by co-sponsoring H.R. 182, the Child Citizen Protection Act.

Sincerely,

The Reverend _____
Senior Minister of First Unitarian Church of Metropolis

_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, and _____
Social Action Committee of the First Unitarian Church of Metropolis