



How to Submit a Letter to the Editor

A great way to raise awareness is by submitting a Letter to the Editor (LTE). Not only will it inform your community about the importance of global vaccines, it may even appear in a publication your member of Congress reads! Below is an outline and sample LTE you can use as a starting point. The Shot@Life team is eager to provide support throughout the drafting, editing, and placing of your LTE — just email us at champions@shotatlife.org or contact our Communications Associate at kblanton@unfoundation.org.

@ Introduction: Present the issue

- One-and-a-half million children die each year from vaccine-preventable diseases
- One in five children around the world still lacks access to basic childhood vaccines

@ Personal Connection: Add a personal or community connection to this issue

- Have you or a member of your family contracted a vaccine-preventable disease? Do you work or know someone who works in an area where one may be at higher risk (i.e. military, peace corps, etc.)?
- Has your occupation or previous travel allowed you to see firsthand the ways communities without access to vaccines are affected?
- Has your community ever suffered from an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease?
- Do you have a personal story to include? What motivates you to advocate for Shot@Life?
- Do you see vaccines as an education, national security, gender equality, or other issue?

@ Statistics: Use statistics to support your argument

- 13.5 million children around the world lack access to vaccination services.
- Unvaccinated children disproportionately live in fragile countries.
- By expanding access to existing vaccines, we can save a child's life every 20 seconds.
- For every \$1 spent on childhood immunizations, the world sees \$44 in economic benefits.
- Since 2000, the measles vaccine has saved over 21 million lives.
- We are over 99% of the way to achieving a polio-free world. In 1988, we saw 350,000 children paralyzed by polio. Last year, we saw just 33 cases.
- Funding for global vaccine programs is significantly less than 1% of the total U.S. federal budget.
- U.S. Government funding for immunization activities helps nations build strong health systems to more efficiently respond to disease outbreaks, such as the Ebola crisis, Zika outbreak, and new emerging diseases — which ultimately helps protect Americans at home and abroad.



@ Conclusion: Compel readers and policymakers to act

- Be sure to mention your **member(s) of Congress** and ask them to strengthen and prioritize funding for global vaccine programs through partners such as UNICEF, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, CDC, and USAID.
- Remind readers that an outbreak anywhere is a threat everywhere; we all have a stake in keeping our children, our families, and our communities safe from vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Let policymakers know that expanding vaccine access is not only beneficial to country economies, our national security, and overall global stability — it is also the right thing to do.

Sample Letter to the Editor

On April 15, the first measles case in eight years was confirmed in Iowa. The affected individual was reported to have been traveling and likely contracted the disease abroad, highlighting that outbreaks anywhere are a threat to children everywhere.

Access to vaccines may not be an issue for children in Iowa; however, many children around the world lack access, leaving them vulnerable to deadly outbreaks. Shot@Life, a United Nations Foundation organization, is working to increase access to lifesaving childhood vaccinations with the goal of eliminating childhood deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases. Diseases know no borders, and in an increasingly globalized world, diseases can spread from remote locations to population centers in mere hours. Increasing access to vaccines abroad not only saves the lives of millions of children worldwide, but also helps protect Iowans from the spread of diseases like measles.

Luckily, most children in the United States will not die from measles, however, children in other regions may lack access to quality health care and receiving vaccines can be the difference between life and death. We have the tools and the means to stop the outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles.

I encourage you to reach out to Sens. Joni Ernst and Chuck Grassley to ask them to prioritize funding for global health programs such as UNICEF and USAID that help deliver lifesaving vaccines to children around the world.