

Included in this appendix are my assignments and samples of student work from CARE participants for each of those assignments: for the pre-conference assignment, response papers from [redacted] and [redacted] (pages 2-13); for the post-conference assignment, a response paper from [redacted] (pages 14-16); and four letters, from [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted] (pages 17-25). I include so many letters because each is to a different legislator, so they give a sense of the different passions and conversations of the students. [redacted]

## **Response Paper #2 for PAR 354 (CARE participants only)**

Your assignment for this response paper is tied to the CARE conference that you will be participating in. First, take a look at the tentative conference schedule at <http://www.careconference.org/events.asp>. Notice in particular the generic label “Issues Sessions” in the afternoon. The CARE conference organizers have put together a number of different issues sessions, where you will get a crash course on a particularly important humanitarian, educational, or social issue (or set of issues) and what you can do about it: it is up to *you*, however, to choose which sessions to attend. This second response paper is intended to help you with those decisions.

In the CARE folder I have placed on Blackboard, you will find a document with information on the issues sessions\* at this year’s conference. Your job is to track down *reputable* information on these issues (and speakers, where they are identified), and to think carefully about which of them is most important to you, and why. In your response paper (*minimum 700 words*), you will then critically justify your top three choices of issues sessions. Once you are at the conference, your decision about which sessions to attend may change based on other factors (such as finding a balance with some of the others who are in your legislative group), but I hope that this preparatory work will help guide you in your thinking. You will need to provide a bibliography page, as well, letting me know where you found your information. I would suggest that you first target business or charitable foundation websites, reputable newspapers (e.g. *NY Times*, *LA Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*) and periodicals (e.g. *US News and World Report*, *Newsweek*) for your research.

I will be grading this paper on its critical engagement and dialogue with the sources you find (including the quality of those sources), as well as on the features I mentioned for the first response paper: its depth of thought (have you thought seriously about the issue?), organization and structure (is the paper arranged as a unitary piece, rather than just a collection of disparate thoughts?), clarity (have you clearly articulated your position?), specificity (have you dealt in specifics rather than vague generalities?), grammatical/rhetorical issues (have you cleaned up any grammar problems, reduced use of passive voice, etc.?), and proofreading.

This paper is due at the beginning of class on **11 February, 2011**.

\*Note: I am still waiting on an updated list of issues sessions for the conference from conference organizers. I had hoped to have it by Friday, but have not yet received it. I will post the updated information as soon as I have it in hand.

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Response Paper 2

PAR

### Response Paper # 2

After reviewing the sessions being presented at the CARE conference the three that most stood out and appealed to me were: “How breaking gender norms will change the face of maternal health”, “voices in the field, a day in the life of humanitarian aid worker”, and “a policy agenda to unlock the power of girls: the girl effect.”

The first session that peaked my interest was “How Breaking Gender Norms will Change the Face of Maternal Health.” This particular session appeals to me because it is an issue that I have not only witnessed to be an issue in Africa, but have also studied in two of my anthropology courses with focus on Africa. In a course I took last semester we read a book entitled Nine Hills to Nambonkaha. The book centers around a young Peace Corps worker from America named Sarah Erdman who was stationed in a rural village in Burkina Faso, Africa. Within the book Erdman discusses the impact that gender roles often play in maternal health as well as health of the infant. She discusses the damage that lack of information, knowledge and access to medical technologies such as condoms and birth control can wreck on a rural village. The women in the village are not in control of their own sexuality it is considered to belong to the husband, which allows him to have unprotected sex with his wife no questions asked. (Erdman 224) Coupled with some of the polygamous practices and the rise in prostitution this practice can leave women open to HIV infection, STD’s, unwanted pregnancies and many other health risks. What Erdman

attempts to do in her work in the village is to educate the women on care of their own bodies especially when they are pregnant or with young children. She stresses the importance of spacing children so that the maternal body has time to heal and produce healthier offspring; she also discusses birth control and condoms as a way for a woman to protect herself and her offspring. (Erdman 224) HIV infection can be spread to infants very easily through pregnancy and breast milk so it is important for the women to not only protect their own bodies and futures, but that of their children as well. The gender roles presented in this example show how the woman's role in society and in marriage can greatly effect a population. When women do not have control over their own bodies in a society and are limited in their movements outside of the home, it puts maternal health at a great risk. In our civilization it is very rare that a pregnant woman will not seek gynecological and obstetrician care, however in many societies in underdeveloped countries it is a common occurrence. This lack of maternal care can lead to serious consequences for both the mother and the infant. By giving women the tools they need to succeed, freedom over their bodies, education and power, women and their babies have a much better chance at life. UNICEF in their State of the Worlds Children 2008 edition states that women who are literate and well educated on the whole have better access and knowledge of health care and that in turn leads to more educated decisions on health care and this in turn leads to a lower infant mortality rate.(UNICEF 22) It goes on to site an example from Bangladesh, children born to mothers that have at least a primary school education have a 20% increase in survival which increases to 80% when the mother has obtained a secondary school education. (UNICEF 22) When gender roles that keep women out of the loop and in the home can be reversed, women have the potential to

increase the health of the entire family unit. Women are an untapped resource in the fight against many things: illiteracy, the spread of HIV, high infant mortality rates, poverty and can even gain a role in sustainability. Women's roles have taken away their voice, power and even control over their own bodies for a long time and I feel that this interference has led to many of the problems underdeveloped countries are facing today. I feel that utilizing women in maternal and infant health is one of the best and only ways in which to reduce infant and maternal mortality and illness and I am interested in what CARE has to say about the issue as well.

In keeping with this concept it brings me to my next topic of interest "a policy agenda to unlock the power of girls: the girl effect." As I stated previously women are very important to the health of the family as well as the overall health of a nation. According to my class notes taken from my anthropology class led by Dr. Mwaniki, women can have a hand in many aspects of development.(Mwaniki 1) Women are often confined to the "domestic realm" of society and are often excluded from political or community decisions but are often subject to the decisions made by the men of the community. (Mwaniki 1) Women however, can play a major role in development. Women can be educated on many issues ranging from health care, sustainable growing practices, and can be a useful part of decisions concerning the community. For Sarah Erdman, in Nine Hills to Nambonkaha, she found it extremely useful to educate the women on matters of health care. She taught the women effective home remedies for certain illnesses or symptoms such as fever, diarrhea, indigestion etc. (Erdman 211) She also taught the women how to recognize the symptoms of when a person needed to be taken to a hospital or when a situation was beyond home remedies. (Erdman 211) In

educating the women, Erdman was able to improve the health of the entire village and especially the new members of it, the infants. Women can also be taught sustainable methods of agriculture to implement. In many underdeveloped countries, especially in Africa, men often migrate to the cities for factory jobs or work on plantations for cash crops and the women perform the agricultural duties within the villages. By teaching the women sustainable farming methods it can allow a better yield for the community and the families, and also help the environment. In villages that cut trees to use as firewood, a practical thing to teach women would be to replant trees as they go and to create a rotation schedule, allowing some areas to re-grow again before harvesting them. This type of knowledge can prove crucial not just for the survival of the environment but for the overall survival of the community as well. I am interested in this topic because I feel that women can play a huge role in the development of a country if they are simply given the chance.

The last topic I found extremely interesting was “Voices from the Field: A Day in the Life of a Humanitarian Aid Worker.” While I researched the man who would be speaking at the conference I could find little on him. However, I do know some about the area that he is working in and I am aware that it is a difficult area that is still recovering from a brutal civil war between two of its ethnic groups. It is another example of how colonialism and its ignorant separation of tribal units into countries, is still being paid for by the people it disrupted. I found this topic especially interesting because although I have done some humanitarian work as well it will be interesting to hear another person’s perspective, especially in a country such as Rwanda. I am interested to hear the difficulties and hardships he faces as well as the rewards and accomplishments he enjoys.

I would like to hear what types of obstacles he faces on a day to day basis and how he overcomes them to reach his goals. I am interested in what exactly his goals are whether they are a general improvement of health within the communities that he works with or if he has specific goals he attempts to reach. I am extremely interested in what he has to say because I feel that it can help me to decide if it is a field I would be interested in working in.

Upon researching the three topics for the sessions given at the CARE conference I feel I am now somewhat versed in the subjects and look forward to discovering more about them.



PAR 354

February 11, 2011

### Why CARE?

Being a Religion major with a minor in Women's Studies allows me to be able to focus on the issue of suffering on a global level as well as on a feminine level. I have chosen to focus on three separate issues in this paper; the first is titled "How Breaking Gender Norms Will Change the Face of Maternal Health", the second "Helping Countries Break the Cycle of Conflict and Emergencies: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan and Haiti", and the last is "Using Social Media to Create Social Change". These three topics interest me because I am a woman who plans to become a mother, I have always wanted to assist other countries in conflict and emergency situations and I believe that Social Media can be very helpful and I would like to learn how to use it productively. I believe that these three will assist me in my everyday life and will also allow me to gain more insight into situations I am unaware of.

According to UNICEF "A woman dies from complications in child birth every minute-- about 529,000 each year—the vast majority of them in developing countries". This is an incredibly large number of women dying each year and is, in fact, the largest difference in health care between classes. I had no idea these numbers were so high or what is being done about them. UNICEF combats these terrible statistics in several different ways they help to improve emergency obstetric care, lay foundations for good prenatal care, help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and they get girls into schools. All of these things are ways that change the gender norms in many societies around the world and they will benefit maternal health in the long run.

The session on Maternal Health is being presented by Suman Bisnt from CARE Rwanda where women hold 56% of parliament seats (Editorial, 2010). UNICEF also stated that “A woman in sub-Saharan Africa has a 1 in 16 chance of dying in pregnancy of childbirth, compared to a 1 in 4,000 risk in developing countries”. In another article from the National Public Radio two women were interviewed about the maternal health issues in Bangladesh and Ghana. The two women stated that it was the men and relatives who made the decision where the woman was to have the child. *The Lancet* stated that “Tackling gender equity is difficult because it involves challenging cultural norms and stereotypes.” This idea is a very difficult one that can also be applied to changing conflict and emergency issues.

Brian Cavanaugh and Paul O’Brien are the two people speaking about aid effectiveness in Afghanistan. In 2010 Brian Cavanaugh was the Country Director for CARE Afghanistan as well as the field contact. According to his report

“CARE’s projects in Afghanistan focus on women’s social and economic empowerment; education, with a particular focus on girls and women; maternal and infant health care support; sub-national governance through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP); IDP/refugee return and reintegration; and disaster relief”.

This was interesting to me because I was unaware that there was so much support happening in Afghanistan. I knew that there were programs helping refugees and disaster relief but nothing else. I found it particularly interesting that CARE Afghanistan has recently become more focused on women’s rights regarding money, political issues and violence problems. Paul O’Brien spent his time working on the political end of the program.

For five years Paul O'Brien was the president's senior economic adviser in Afghanistan. He worked for CARE International as their Afghanistan advocacy coordinator as well as the African policy adviser. He is currently working for Oxfam as the Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, previously the director of the aid effectiveness team. He has firsthand experience with policy reform and development planning. In 2010 CARE was working with the government in order to solidify policies and programs to assist refugees return to Afghanistan, rebuilding, and establishing a sound education system. While CARE Afghanistan works towards conflict resolution CARE Haiti and Ginny Ubik aid a disaster stricken country.

Ginny Ubik, the country director at the time for CARE Haiti in September 2010, said "Our teams are working hard to deliver effective aid to the most vulnerable people in the communities affected by Tomas and the cholera outbreak". Recently CARE reported that "As of January 16<sup>th</sup>, there have been 194,095 reported cases and 3,889 deaths from the disease [Cholera] which spreads in water". This has been a major issue in Haiti for over 100 days now and CARE is still struggling to contain the outbreak. The CARE Press Release on January 28, 2011 stated that "massive hygiene promotion and delivery of water and sanitation have helped contain the disease in some areas of the country". This couldn't have been done without the help of volunteers, the media and public events. "CARE has reached more than 420,000 people with hygiene promotion through a network of volunteers and public events".

CARE is an incredible example for media helping to make change. However, Adam Conner, Allison Fine, and Shaun King all have something to do with SOCIAL media and how it can be used to create change. Adam Conner is the manager for privacy and global public policy at Facebook in Washington D.C. He uses Facebook to post blogs about issues around the world as well as in America. For example, on May 5, 2009 he posted a blog titled 'Getting the Facts on

Swine Flu' and it was "liked" by 2,705 people while 897 people commented on it. Those are just the people who added the stream to their Facebook page which allowed every one of their friends to look at it and choose to "like" it or not. That is an incredible amount of people looking at a single post. On the other hand Allison Fine researches and writes about the interplay between social media and social change.

Allison Fine has an extensive resume beginning with her degrees from New York University and Vanderbilt University. She has her own website and has published two books. She is an avid blogger and speaker. There are several news articles about her work beginning in 2004 and she has several events in her future. Her blog, titled *A Fine Blog*, was last updated on February 2, 2011 discussing the public school system. She also Tweets her plans for change which was begun by the final speaker, Shaun King.

Pastor Shaun King is the creator of a social good campaign called TwitChange. He began this endeavor in 2010 due to the earthquake in Haiti. In an interview with CBS Shaun King said "after the media attention disappeared, the TwitChange team conceived this idea as a way to refocus awareness... Over 150 celebrities ranging from Justin Bieber to Tony Robbins were involved, and Eva Longoria served as our spokesperson". They raised over \$500,000 which they used to begin construction on a home and school for severely disabled orphans in Haiti. He says that "Everything about TwitChange relies on the internet and social media". He discusses ways people can get involved and what their goals are. These three different people have used social media in way that I could never imagine.

In researching these topics and people I was introduced to ideas and events that I was clueless about before. I believe that going to these sessions will be even more interesting because I have this ground work. I am able to use every single one of these topics in my classes as well as

in my everyday life. I have found that maternal health is an issue all over the world, that CARE and other organizations like UNICEF have a wide range of programs they assist with and that social media can actually be used for a good cause. I plan on looking into more of these topics as we near the CARE conference.

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### **Response Paper #3 for PAR 354 (for everyone)**

For your third response paper (*minimum 700 words*), your objective is to reflect on and consolidate what you have taken from your service environments outside of class thus far: this paper is intended to help you in that reflection integration of the time you have spent doing service learning. Please describe, then, **substantively, one or two** things you have learned from your service learning experiences (either at CARE or your other service-learning venues) this semester, that you have not learned from the texts we have read thus far, either on the theoretical or practical side of the suffering we observe in the world. Do **not** turn this paper into a list of things you have learned: stick to just one or two issues that you can flesh out in some detail.

Here are just a few of the issues you might consider before writing this paper: have you found new ways of making sense of or responding to suffering that you have not considered before? Have these had any effect on your personal life, or on the way you think others should deal with or respond to suffering? Has your own sense of responsibility changed at all in dealing with the suffering of others this semester?

The important features I will be grading this paper on are the following: its depth of thought and reflection on the service you have done (have you thought seriously about the issue or issues?), organization and structure (is the paper arranged as a unitary piece, rather than just a collection of disparate thoughts?), clarity (have you clearly articulated your position?), specificity (have you dealt in specifics rather than vague generalities?), grammatical/rhetorical issues (have you cleaned up any grammar problems, reduced use of passive voice, etc.?), and proofreading.

This paper is due at the beginning of class on **18 March, 2011**.

PAR-354

Dr. Whitmire

3/18/11

In everything our class has read this semester, unless I have missed it, we have yet to find a passage that teaches “Go out into the world and prevent as much suffering as you can, just because that’s the right thing to do!” This was my problem with many of our readings. In the case of the stoics, I love applying their lessons to my own life, but I don’t think it’s the correct way to deal with the suffering of others. I hold that humans have an understanding of good and evil, and throughout the semester, I have felt that it is good to help others, and relieve their suffering, and many of our texts fail to address that, being caught up in theodicy or other religious dilemmas in the face to the problem of evil. Some of our readings deal quite well with the issue of why suffering exists, in the context of various religious traditions, but then leave it at that. Others say that the fabric of the world is suffering, and that it is futile to try and prevent it. They hold that the only way out is passage into a sort of afterlife, a position that is not a living option for me. What I gained from the CARE Conference was a set of practical tools to combat suffering in this world, and a sense of political efficacy that comes from directly lobbying one of the most powerful governmental institutions in the world.

I have sometimes felt that I do not have the power to prevent suffering, as there is so much suffering in the world, and I do not have the resources to combat it. The CARE Conference reminded me that there are entities which do have that power, and that I have the ability to influence and aid these entities. When I achieve a steady income, I now plan to set aside a reasonable percentage to donate to a few worthy causes engaged in the prevention of suffering. I am not content to rely upon an afterlife in which all suffering will be gone, as many religious traditions would tell me, or trust that a change in perspective is all that is necessary, as the stoics would have me believe. There are actions I can take, right here in this world, to alleviate suffering and attack its causes, and I will not let these opportunities escape me. While I am alive, I have the power to correct injustice, and I cannot call myself an ethical

PAR-354

Dr. Whitmire

3/18/11

man while I do not exercise that power. The CARE Conference filled this gap, and indeed, allowed me to exercise this new lesson as we lobbied on Capitol Hill, and I will not soon forget that.

At the CARE Conference, I believe I finally gained a sense of the scale of suffering in this world. The other half of the world is so easy to ignore – they do not have the voice to gain our attention, nor the strength to knock on our doors. It is up to the ones with the voice, and with the strength, who have the means and the will that relative wealth affords, to call attention to the plight of the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. In this day and age, these people have become all too easy to avoid. Indeed, it requires a conscious effort to even find out about them. The United States is so affluent that we can shield our eyes with our money, and protect our feet with fine shoes, so we do not feel the unfortunates that we are trampling in our hurry to balance the budget and “take care of our own problems”, small as they are in comparison. At the CARE Conference, these protections were stripped of me, and I saw my responsibilities clearly: to feed the hungry, to house the homeless, to cure the sick. All citizens of western democracies have this power, and, I believe, this obligation.

The CARE Conference was a good experience that filled in a lot of gaps left by our reading. As an atheist, I am much less concerned with why suffering exists, and more concerned with making it go away. I have no divine theory to defend in the face of suffering, and my energy is better focused on what the best ways are of dealing with the more than a billion people in extreme poverty, and the third of the developing world that is illiterate. The CARE Conference gave me some good ideas about what to do in that regard.

### **Response Paper #4 for PAR 354 (CARE participants only)**

For your fourth response paper (*minimum 700 words*), your objective is to demonstrate what you have learned before, during and after the CARE conference in a reasonable, articulate advocacy letter to one of the US Senators or Representatives that you visited with during the legislative lobbying day at the conference. The choice of the content of the letter is up to you; however, it should build upon the work you have done for the course and at the conference. You will need to think clearly about who your audience is, the issue that you want to present, and how it should be presented. Remember that although this is a class assignment, the primary audience here is different than it usually is: namely, your congressional representative and his/her staff.

**After** I have graded the assignments, it will be your choice whether to alter your letter in any way before you send it to Washington. Remember that you are speaking to your representative as a constituent advocating for whatever cause or program you think will best ease the suffering we have discussed over the course of this semester – whether that is education, financial assistance monies for developing countries, targeted micro-financing monies, disaster relief, or something else. Do not be afraid to use philosophical, moral, or religious arguments that we have discussed this semester, but remember that 1) budget issues are currently dominating the landscape in D.C., and 2) your target audience may respond differently to different kinds of arguments. You will want to read up on the representative or senator to whom you are sending the letter.

Here are just a few of the issues you might consider before writing this letter: What is the philosophical/religious/moral basis of your position? Does your position make clear sense? At what level of detail can you make a clear, concise case in a letter like this? What is the main argument for the position you are advocating? Are there other, subsidiary arguments to be made? What would the practical outcome of your position be? Will what you are advocating for actually help ease some of the world's suffering? How so? Does your cause make economic sense? How would you respond to counter-arguments that there is not enough money available for certain kinds of assistance programs that already exist right now, much less new programs?

The important features I will be grading this paper on are the following: its depth of thought and reflection on why your issue is important, tone and target (have you appropriately pitched your letter for the person to whom it is addressed, or his/her staff?), organization and structure (is the paper arranged as a unitary piece, rather than just a collection of disparate thoughts?), clarity (have you clearly articulated your position?), specificity (have you dealt in specifics rather than vague generalities?), grammatical/rhetorical issues (have you cleaned up any grammar problems, reduced use of passive voice, etc.?), and proofreading.

This paper is due at the beginning of class on **8 April, 2011**.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] · Sylva, NC 28779 / [REDACTED] gmail.com

April 4, 2011

Rep. Richard Burr  
217 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Follow-up to CARE visit and request for support of USAID funding

Dear Representative Burr:

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with your staff on March 9, when I was able to visit as part of the CARE conference in Washington, D.C. from my hometown of Sylva, N.C. We spoke with your staff about three key issues in the fight to end global poverty: the impact of U.S. foreign aid to countries around the world, support for increased access to education for women and children, and the availability of micro-financing and other low-cost alternatives to bolster a third-world economy.

As a young mother and someone who has grown up with friends and family members in Iraq, I share with you a commitment to the stability of the United States' security interests and fiscal management that provides economic opportunities for future generations of Americans. I'm also joined by nearly 8,000 CARE supporters in Western North Carolina in advocating for the protection of foreign aid funds as a way to support those objectives.

From an ethical and moral perspective, I believe that all religions and, indeed, all societies share a basic empathy for the suffering of others as an inherent component of their structure. This is nowhere more evident than in the ideals that America embodies for the world; the importance of our continued role as the "light on the hill" cannot be underestimated. The role and image of Americans overseas is more important than we are able to quantify; it will determine the economic and political world in which my daughter comes of age by providing an example of democratic freedom – or, worse, by providing an example of what *not* to do.

While I cannot deny that there are many suffering at home who are no less deserving of our understanding and assistance, the argument that we should not spend our own dollars on those outside our country is short-sighted and promotes less effective use of our tax dollars. Although I believe that further education would help eliminate that stigma, it is still not a credible foundation for choosing to cut or eliminate foreign aid funds.

The U.S. AID program is able to meet three crucial needs for America in a developing global economy: contributing to the stability of potentially violent regions that are important to the U.S.; increasing goodwill and human responsiveness to American presence and identity; and bolstering a stronger Third World economy that contributes to the availability of resources. The best part is, this agency works towards all these goals – political stability, a better American image and a stronger global economy – on less than 1.4% of the total American budget.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] · Sylva, NC 28779 / [REDACTED] gmail.com

I'm sure that, as a member of the Select Committee on Intelligence, you are well aware of the violent and often dangerous political climates in regions that are important to U.S. interests. Just in the few weeks since the conference, we have seen American troops sent both to Japan, to aid in rebuilding after the tsunami, and to Libya, as part of a global effort to protect citizens from the ravages of a dictatorship that has been allowed to stand for far too long. We still have American troops on the ground in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and our dependence on the stability of that region is paramount to our economic survival.

I support these and other military interventions so long as they are executed in the most effective way, and I believe that the best way to ensure that is to continue funding USAID programs. USAID helps ensure that both diplomatic and military actions remain options to us in those countries, and helps ease the transition once troops are moved out of a country in which there has been a conflict. Their presence can eliminate the need for such actions in the future, by providing leadership and stability in rebuilding societies, and can provide a better image of America as a country for which humanitarian efforts are key components of military strategy.

The importance of these economies is also, I am sure, evident to you; with rapid global economic development, our strength and wealth depends on being able to increase our markets and our production. With the current state of our economy, job initiatives for American workers and expanded access to education will do much to ensure that human capital will be available in the coming years. However, it is up to us now to contribute, through USAID and other sources, to the new economies in developing countries that will provide markets for the products that human capital will produce.

Please join me in supporting the existing USAID budget during the current rounds of negotiations in Congress. I believe that Rajiv Shah, the new director of USAID, has done a wonderful job of evaluating his program and eliminating projects that are less effective than others. I encourage you to explore his actions and applaud his sense of fiscal responsibility by preventing further cuts to the foreign aid budget.

Thank you for your time, and I appreciate the work you do on behalf of North Carolinians.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sylva, NC 28779

[REDACTED] gmail.com

April 8, 2011

The Honorable Representative Renee Ellmers  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Ellmers,

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with a member of your staff on March 10th on behalf of CARE, one of the largest humanitarian organizations in the world. Even though your office may not be entirely supportive of CARE's initiatives, I felt that we were being listened to, and that the conversation was engaging. Thank you for the experience and the time you shared with us.

I would like to take this opportunity to follow-up with you on one of the issues that was discussed during our meeting, and that is the deep cuts that have been proposed to the foreign aid budget. I am concerned that by the time this letter reaches you, the window of opportunity to act on this issue may have passed, but foreign aid will continue to be relevant in future years, and if cuts are made, I hope that they will be reversed in the coming years, as the economy improves.

According to a poll conducted by [worldpublicopinion.org](http://worldpublicopinion.org), the average American is under the impression that fully one quarter of our federal budget goes toward foreign aid, when in reality, our foreign aid budget is only one percent. In that same poll, Americans reported that they think we should be spending about ten percent on foreign aid.

It is my belief that the reason Americans are overestimating the amount we spend on foreign aid is that our dollars spent in the developing world are producing great results, and it's hard to believe we are doing so much good work with so little funding. Our foreign aid dollars provide antiviral treatment for HIV/AIDS to over 3.2 million people around the world, and provide basic immunizations to more than 100 million children per year. Through our foreign assistance programs, we have reduced maternal mortality and infant mortality significantly, and we have made great strides in increasing access to clean water and sanitation in the developing world. My point is this: this is an area of our budget that is working for us. These are not dollars being wasted on pork-barrel projects that aren't going anywhere, or pet projects of special interests; these are dollars that are being spent to help those in need, and provide relief to those who are suffering.

In a time when there are so many humanitarian crises around the world, with the recent earthquakes in Japan, Pakistan, and New Zealand, it has rarely been so crucial to maintain a robust program of foreign aid. The world needs our assistance now more than ever. Furthermore, the director of USAID has said that we are on the verge of developing a vaccine for Malaria, one of the largest killers in the developing world. This vaccine would be a spectacular breakthrough in the field of global health, but it will do the world no good if we don't have the funding to distribute it. Please bear these things in mind as you make decisions concerning the foreign aid budget this year, and in the future.

It is a myth that foreign assistance does not benefit the average American economically. There is a popular misconception that when we spend money overseas, it has left our country, and is no longer helping us. But the truth is that foreign assistance supports the American economy. 20% of United States jobs are export-related, and almost half of our exports are going to the developing world. By stimulating economic growth in those countries, we are increasing demand for our exports, and creating jobs in our export industries. The bottom line is that foreign assistance helps our economy as well as the economies of developing countries.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my letter, and I urge you to oppose any cuts made to the foreign aid budget, in this year, or future years. One would be hard pressed to find an item in our budget that is more cost-effective and compassionate than foreign assistance. Even the meager share of our budget that is devoted to foreign assistance is doing great things in the world, and I think it would be nothing short of tragic if our development efforts overseas were curtailed in the form of a budget cut. As much as we may be concerned about our own problems, they pale in comparison to the problems faced by one sixth of the world population who lives on less than a dollar a day. Our unemployment rate is nearing 10%, but there are very few in our great nation who have to worry about where their drinking water will come from tomorrow. I sincerely hope that your position on the foreign aid budget will reflect the compassion and generosity shared by your constituents. I would appreciate hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Matthews, NC 28105

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Cullowhee, NC 28723

April 4, 2011

Congressman Shuler

229 Cannon House Office Bldg.

Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Congressman Shuler

I am writing to address to ask that you introduce and/or support legislation that that invests in women's access to financial opportunities through microfinance. Microfinance is one of the most economical ways of providing foreign aid, through a small investment, in time, whole villages are able to create a better more prosperous life for them and their children. These villages are building economies through small businesses similar to those that built America.

The people who microfinance is directed toward is the poorest of the poor, those that are living on less than two dollars a day and have no access to any banking services. Through our countries investment in microfinance programs these people receive training in money management and are able to start small savings pools that allow them to give out loans that allow people to start small businesses. These savings pools are also valuable in emergency situations. In many cases these people are unable to pay for medical care or to cover costs for transportation to a medical center, but through microfinance the money is readily available to be loaned out. Medical treatment allows people to be more productive and is saving lives.

CARE is one of the organizations providing these programs to the poorest of the poor and started their first Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) in Niger in 1991. This first campaign has reached nearly 200,000 people and they have amassed 14 million dollars in savings. Since its humble beginning CARE has now launched 54,000 VSLAs in 21 African countries, and there are around 1.9 million members in these programs. Microfinance is a low cost investment that yields great results.

Foreign aid is an important investment in the lives of the impoverished but it is also has important economic and defense affects for the United States. The Secretary of Defense Dr. Robert M. Gates stated that: "Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers." Through supporting foreign aid money is being saved and soldiers are allowed to stay at home with their families. Also, by helping the economies of these developing countries trade is encouraged between them and the United States. Foreign assistance, especially through the means of microfinance, is the way to building more stable countries, leading to a more stable world.

The amount of suffering in the world is immense and while it is easy to block it out and live our privileged lives this is not the path that is going to lead to a better world for all. I have felt a call to help those in need for a long time, and while trying to deal with amount of suffering that can be seen I had a conversation with a friend and he told me "to let my heart break for the broken" and that is how I have lived my life since. Investing in the poor and allowing them to rise out of poverty is not only good for our country but it is the moral thing to do. Shane Claiborne one of the prominent figures in the 'ordinary radicals' movement in the Christian church, and a story he told in his book "The Irresistible Revolution" has evolved the way I think about God, suffering, and how to respond to that suffering:

"Two guys were talking to each other, and one of them says he has a question for God. He wants to ask why God allows all of this poverty and war and suffering to exist in the world. And his friend says, "Well, why don't you ask?" The fellow shakes his head and says he is scared. When his friend asks why, he mutters, "I'm scared God will ask me the same question." Over and over, when I ask God why all of these injustices are allowed to exist in the world, I can feel the Spirit whisper to me, "You tell me why we allow this to happen. You are my body, my hands, my feet."

In conclusion, I ask that you support legislation that supports foreign aid, especially microfinance, not only because of the economic, global stability effects of investing in the poor but because of the moral obligation to be God's hands in feet in this world.

Thanks

Sincerely,

██████████

4/8/2011

The Honorable David E. Price  
United States Representative  
2162 Rayburn House Office Building  
District of Columbia, 20515-3304

Dear Representative Price,

My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I am from Chapel Hill, NC and a current student at Western Carolina University. I am writing this letter to ask you to co-sponsor the Education for All Act when it is re-introduced. This act will make global education a priority.

I recently attended the CARE conference in D.C. as part of one of my classes. Before I attended CARE I knew about suffering around the world and how difficult it is for many children to receive an education of any kind. However I was unaware of just how large the numbers were and that the numbers consisted mostly of women and young girls. As the oldest daughter of two educated parents, a Father with a BS in engineering and a Mother with a MS in occupational therapy, the ability to attend college and receive the education which I have is very important to me. When I heard that approximately seventy-one *million* children throughout the world are uneducated and unable to attend school I was in shock. Needless to say my shock continued when I found out that three in *five* of these children are girls. That was what caught my attention and began to drive my will to do what I could to assist these young women, which is why I am writing to you.

I am very aware of your work regarding education in North Carolina being a student who has benefited from Public Law 105-34 as well as having friends in the Teaching Fellows program (public law 110-315). When I see how education has improved the lives of my peers I begin to imagine what an impact we can make in developing countries. As I'm sure you are aware, the heart of economic and social development is education. Educating girls and young women is a very important part in fighting poverty on a global level. As my professor says "you can give a person a fish and feed them for a day but give them a pole and teach them to fish and you feed them for life".

Basic education is so important to developing countries and their economic growth. We can see that in order for a country to have sustained growth within its economy it needs to have established primary education. Research has shown that for every year a girl stays in school her income increases ten to twenty percent. A quality education ensures that the student gains skills, knowledge, and self-reliance which are needed to expand their opportunities as well as increase their income. Not only does education benefit the overall society but it also keeps young girls out of forced marriages allowing them to plan their families, live healthier lives and educate their children and community. The skills, experience, and knowledge which come with education and leadership development, provide young

women with better decision making skills, effective problem solving techniques and the ability to shape their own futures.

As you can see educating girls and women will shape the future of our world. Studies show that educated girls and women have a greater income, higher productivity, are more likely to delay marriage as well as childbirth and raise better-educated and healthier children when they are ready. A child with an educated and literate mother is fifty percent more likely to grow up and two times more likely to attend school. Sadly, adolescence is the time when girls are especially vulnerable to different forms of discrimination and violence including, but not limited to, rape, exposure to HIV/AIDS, forced marriages, and heavy labor demands. In 2000, over one hundred and eighty nations discovered their shared responsibility in ending poverty and created the Millennium Development Goals or the MDGs. MDG #2 is aimed at achieving universal primary education and the aim of MDG #3 is to reduce the gender gap at every level of education. Both of these goals have caused an average increased rate of four million children per year attending school but there will still be fifty-six million children out of school by 2015.

Representative Price you are well aware that a quality education begins with quality teachers. Unfortunately many of the children in schools are *not* receiving a quality education. They are receiving an education which is lacking in foundational skills such as mathematics and literacy. The Education for All Act is a solution to this problem. It will eliminate school fees, expand the access to education, support teacher training, support schooling infrastructure, and contribute to initiatives reaching marginalized and remote populations. With our current economic environment it is sometimes difficult to look beyond our own borders but as I have said before education has the power to encourage economic growth while reducing poverty. I ask again that you consider co-sponsoring the Education for All Act upon its re-introduction. I would also like to thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope it has left you with new information to think about.

Sincerely,

A redacted signature consisting of two solid black rectangular boxes placed side-by-side.