

EPIC Multi-Disciplinary Social Justice

Current Events Friday Special: Writing to your United States Representative

TEAM EPIC

11/18/2016

Elections in the United States can bring the best and the worst out of society. It is a time when the people make their voice heard on a whole range of issues:

**-The Environment - Public Health and Healthcare - Civil and Human Rights
-National Security and Terrorism -Immigration - Economic Growth
- Income Inequality**

It is ok that we disagree on how our government and society prioritizes and tries to develop solutions to these issues. It is actually beneficial that we are all different and that we all have to figure this out together! What concerns your teachers and maybe our students as well is that some of what we have seen in this election and the resulting changes in the Presidential administration do not seem acceptable if we compare them to the values that we try to practice as a school: Embracing diversity and practicing patient, respectful dialogue. It is in this spirit that we are encouraging you to write to your United States Representative. The teachers at EPIC at the Johnson Center encourage you to use this letter script as a resource to do something EVERYONE in this country is allowed to do, which is to express themselves and participate in government.

- 1.) Work with a teacher and find a letter script that addresses the issue that concerns you most.**
- 2.) Copy and Paste the script onto a Word Document or Google Document**
- 3.) Include other issues of concern that**
- 4.) Include a closing in your letter at the bottom, leaving space in-between the “Sincerely” and your name so you can sign it in ink.**

Sincerely,

Your Name (handwritten signature)

Your Name (typed)

Issues that may concern you:

- The appointment of Steven Bannon, A leader in the alt-right, white supremacist friendly political movement and Chief Strategist and equal partner to the President's Chief of Staff. This political appointment has applauded by members of the the Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi Party, and other White Nationalist groups
- The condition of our urban communities and the negative effects of poverty
- Racial bias in law enforcement and the negative effects it has on communities
- Women's rights and health
- immigration reform
- Civil and Human Rights
- The Refugee Crisis
- The construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, that not only has threatened the water supply of an Native American community, but turned local and federal law enforcement agencies against people practicing the First Amendment Right to Free Speech and Public Assembly.
- The use or misuse of public funding

Contact Information for United States Representative John Katko:

Mailing Address:

The Honorable John Katko
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Email link: <https://katko.house.gov/contact/offices>

Syracuse Office Phone: (315) 423-5657

Washington DC Office Phone: Phone: (202) 225-3701

Letter Script for a writing to a United States Representative: Use this script to guide your letter. Substitute what you want to address in your letter where there are bold parentheses.

The Honorable John Katko
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Katko,

My name is _____ and I am attending high school at the EPIC Program in the Syracuse City School District. I am a constituent in your congressional district, and I am deeply concerned by **(the issue that is most important to you, the student)**. **(Write a few sentences o about why this issue is important to you.)** I hope that you are able to work with your colleagues in Congress as well as President-Elect Trump's administration to **(state or reiterate your goal concerning the issue you chose)**. Thank you for reading my letter, hear my voice, and consider my opinion.

Sincerely,
Your Name

Letter Script to protest the appointment of Stephen Bannon as Chief Strategist to President-Elect Donald J Trump:

The Honorable John Katko
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Katko,

My name is _____ and I am attending high school at the EPIC Program in the Syracuse City School District. I am a constituent in your congressional district, and I am deeply concerned by the appointment of Stephen Bannon as President-Elect Trump's chief strategist. This election showed us that our country is deeply divided on many crucial issues, and I feel that this political appointment will only further drive our country apart at a time when we need to come together. I hope that you will advocate for his removal from this important post on behalf of our district because I live in a community that values diversity and patient, respectful dialogue. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter, hear my voice, and consider my opinion.

Sincerely, Your Name