

SAMPLE LETTER OR EMAIL TO CONGRESS

Let U.S. Lead

Dear Representative _____,

I am writing to urge you to vote NO on H.R. 2829. The bill is called the United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act of 2011, but it would NOT accomplish any of these laudable goals. H.R. 2829 would actually erode America's leadership at the United Nations, eliminate funding, and return the U.S. to a period when it failed its global commitments.

H.R. 2829 would have us withhold 50% of our obligated payments unless most UN funding is changed from assessed dues to voluntary contributions. A shift towards voluntary contributions would increase U.S. costs because countries could pick and choose what they want to fund. For example, under the current system the rest of the world pays almost 80% of the bill for the critical UN political missions in Iraq and Afghanistan – missions that are working to stabilize those countries so U.S. troops can come home. It's unlikely countries would continue picking up the tab for those missions specifically and overall, financial contributions from countries would certainly drop for other U.S. priorities under a voluntary funding scheme. Therefore, the UN regular budget should continue to be funded by assessed dues.

The reality is reforms and accountability come from engagement, not estrangement. The decision by the Obama Administration and Congress to return to our nation's longstanding tradition to support the UN and pay UN dues in full has made it easier for the U.S. to push for major reforms including strengthening UN oversight and ethics rules and streamlining peacekeeping field operations. Of course, more must be done, but with 193 member states, we cannot expect progress overnight or without setbacks. But much of this forward progress will be lost, as will the United States' ability to advance reform that best serves our interests, if the U.S. loses its legitimacy and seat at the UN by withholding payments.

I urge you to vote NO on H.R. 2829.

Sincerely,

(Name) (Address) (City, State ZIP)