

HOW TO VISIT A REPRESENTATIVE'S LOCAL OFFICE

August is a good month to visit your Representative's local office, since Congress will not be in session for the month.

ARRANGING THE VISIT

1. Call the district office (your local Courthouse or newspaper should know the office number), and find out when the Representative plans to be in the district and ask for an appointment during that time.
2. Follow up with a letter to the Representative's Washington office, including what you would like to discuss and what legislation on the issue is pending (e.g. H.R. 8005 to renew United States compliance with the United Nations sanctions program against Rhodesia). Indicate an openness to hearing the Representative's views. Include names of people who would like to meet with the Representative, and their organizational affiliation.

THE VISIT

1. Study your Representative's voting record. Know how he/she voted on Rhodesian sanctions in 1971 and 1972 and on other issues concerning southern Africa (see enclosed list of swing members of Congress and their votes; information on others is available from the Washington Office on Africa). It might be helpful to find some area of agreement (such as domestic civil rights and labor issues or related foreign affairs issues) to establish some common ground from which to begin discussion.
2. Plan how to present the issue and your position on it. Have complete information on the pending legislation and the arguments your Representative might raise about it. (A summary of current arguments in support of sanctions is enclosed.) Find out what national and local groups support the sanctions program. (A list of supporting national groups is enclosed.) Leave the legislator some printed material which summarizes the arguments for sanctions and the wide support for sanctions. This might include your own statement, a statement from your national or local organization, or a reprint from a national or local newspaper or magazine.
3. Know what questions you would like answered and what you hope to gain from the interview. If the Representative has supported sanctions in the past, ask him/her to co-sponsor H.R. 8005 or to at least make a commitment to vote for the bill when it comes to the floor for a vote. If he/she has opposed sanctions in the past, explain how the situation has changed since the 1972 vote: the national security does not require importation of Rhodesian goods and the domestic ferrochrome industry has suffered from sanctions-breaking. These points can add to moral and political opposition to United States support for the white minority Rhodesian regime. Ask your Representative to change his/her position in this year's vote. If he/she does not seem willing to support the bill, avoid a confron-

tation in which the Representative makes a commitment to oppose sanctions; try to leave some way open for influencing him/her on the issue.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Write the Representative thanking him/her for his/her time, and for support of H.R. 8005 if it is given. If support is not given, repeat your concerns and try to respond to any arguments that the Representative raised.

2. Share information about your visit with others in the District who might also want to communicate with the Representative on this issue. Please write or call us at the Washington Office on Africa to let us know what happened during the visit. We will be glad to send you any information we get from your Representative's Washington office.

Distributed by:

August 7, 1973

Washington Office on Africa
110 Maryland Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
202-546-7961