

DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION

Through Community Action

Some background: the long-term goal of Civil Society Field Hearings is to build participation models that generate a flow of sustained discourse between elected leaders and the people.

Members have different roles. In 2004, Congressman Lee Hamilton (IN, ret.) outlined the roles of a Member of Congress. This information is provided to help you align your topic with the duties of a representative:

- National legislator, working to pass the laws of our nation and determine spending levels for thousands of federal programs;
- Local representative, serving the priorities, interests, and economic needs of their constituents;
- Constituent advocate for individual groups, industries, and communities in the district;
- Committee member, which requires developing specific expertise
- Investigator charged with oversight of the federal government;
- Educator who can translate the work of Congress for constituents as well as the media;
- Student of their constituents;
- Local dignitary and ambassador
- Fundraiser to run for re-election;
- Staff manager
- Party leader in the party's caucus
- Consensus builder both within and between parties

This Civil Society Field Hearing is an opportunity to create a space where your representative can be present as part of the local community. The invitation letter below requests the member's presence to offer comments as a witness or remarks. However, you can change this role based on the member's input and preference. If the member cannot attend, request that a district staffer attend instead.



Subject: Invitation to a Civil Society Field Hearing on the Constitutional Implications and local impacts of downsizing the Federal Government

Dear **[Legislator's Name]**,

On behalf of **[Your Organization or Community Group]**, I am honored to invite you to attend a Civil Society Field Hearing. Like an official field hearing, this event will ask witnesses to testify in a public forum about **[topic of field hearing]**. The result will be a public record of community testimony that you are welcome to enter into the Congressional Record. Your presence would be invaluable, given your leadership and commitment to public service.

The event will take place on **[Date]** at **[Time]** at **[Venue Name, Address]**. We are bringing together legal experts, knowledgeable policy, and community members to provide public witness testimony about **[topic of field hearing]**.

As a representative of our community, we invite you to offer remarks on how these changes might impact governance, economic growth, and public services at the state and federal levels. You can either be a witness yourself, or offer remarks during the event.

Please let us know if you can attend, or if you need additional information.

To confirm your participation or discuss any questions, please reach out to me at **[Your Phone Number]** or **[Your Email]**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,