

# Citizenship in the Nation

## Counselors' Notes for Scouts: What to bring, and what to prepare ahead of time.

### Bring:

- Merit Badge book / Notebook / Pencil
- A sheet of paper for Counselors to keep, with parent/guardian name, complete address, home phone number, and e-mail (could affix address label, then add your name and additional info).

**Req 1** Be able to **discuss** American citizens' **RIGHTS** and **RESPONSIBILITIES**. Participation event.

**Req 2** Bring documentation about your historic site visit, and information to share. Be able to tell when and why you visited, and what most interested you, about the site.

**Req 3** Bring the major topic articles you have read; be ready to discuss your topic.

**Req's 4 & 5** Read the documents ahead of time. Participation event.

**Req 6** **Bring a copy** of a speech of National significance. Be prepared to explain **why** you picked your most important sentence. Try to find something other than the following speeches, but if that is not possible, then think about:

- Ideas if using President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: It is short, but packed full of reflective thought. Think about how it applies to Americans of today.
- Ideas if using Martin Luther King, Jr.'s eloquent "I Have a Dream" speech: we commonly hear and remember the "Dream" portion, but there is much more at the beginning about economic and social inequality.

**Req 7** Be ready to discuss.

**Req 8** A sample letter on p.2 shows good grammar and format to be used when writing to Congress.

### **You should:**

- Know what **Congressional District** you live in.
- Know the US Postal, [Washington, DC] **address** of the member of Congress you wish to write to (Senator or Representative).
- Bring your IDEA for the letter, a draft of what you have already written.
- It's OK to write the letter ahead of time. If you get a response by Merit Badge Weekend, **bring it with you!!**

1 Washington Jefferson Lincoln  
1 Buckingham Palace Circle  
Queensland, Minnesota 88888

April 29, 2017

2 Senator Amy Klobuchar  
302 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

3 I am a Life Boy Scout in Troop 888 of Many Waters  
District, Northern Star Council BSA, working to complete one  
of the requirements for the *Citizenship in the Nation* merit  
badge. I live in Queensland, Minnesota.

4 I am concerned about \_\_\_\_\_... OR My  
question is \_\_\_\_\_? OR Please provide me with  
some information about \_\_\_\_\_. OR Please explain  
your position on \_\_\_\_\_. OR My opinion about  
\_\_\_\_\_ is...

5 One of the reasons I am writing to you about this timely  
issue is \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my letter  
concerning \_\_\_\_\_. I will be very interested to hear  
your thoughts about \_\_\_\_\_.

Yours truly (*or sincerely*),

6 Washington Jefferson Lincoln

*We thought it might be helpful to see a formal letter, so we've provided this one to help you follow a template. Always spell words out in a formal letter: say Minnesota instead of Minn. or MN. Avoid contractions. Use spell-check. Have someone who has good grammar and spelling habits read it with you.*

*Your letter may be typed or handwritten, or sent via email (though the recipient will give more attention to a letter that is neatly and carefully written; if emailing, follow the same format as seen here).*

- 1) Your address; the date
- 2) The recipient's address
- 3) 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: **WHO** you are and **WHERE** you live
- 4) 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, **WHAT**: Begin the body of the letter.

*Pick one topic. Think about a topic happening or that you think should be happening in Minnesota, or, a national issue or legislation currently being considered.*

*Paragraphs should have at least 5 sentences, beginning with the TOPIC sentence. Be clear and concise. Show that you have knowledge of/ have done some thinking/ research about the issue.*

- 5) **WHY** Ask a question, seek information, or share an opinion about the issue. *Give reasons* for your question or opinion. If appropriate, thank the official for their work on the issue.
- 6) After your closing, leave room for your signature above your formal name.

*Keep in mind, the official does not make changes to the law by himself/herself. Writing legislation/laws takes a lot of research, time, and cooperation from both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and often both major parties have to agree as well.*