

Advancing innovation to save lives

April 1, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
State, Foreign Operations, and Related
Programs
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
State, Foreign Operations, and Related
Programs
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee:

As members of the Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC)—a group of more than 25 nonprofit organizations working to increase awareness of the vital role health technologies play in saving lives in the developing world—we write to highlight the critical role of US programs that support global health research and development (R&D) and encourage your continued support for this important work.

US investment in the development of new vaccines, drugs, devices, diagnostics, and other health technologies is essential to addressing some of the world's most pressing health challenges—achieving an AIDS-free generation, curbing the spread of malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), and ending preventable child deaths. We recognize that you face many difficult decisions and are grateful for the Committee's ongoing support for global health R&D. New global health tools and technologies hold promise to dramatically improve the lives of those living in the poorest countries around the world, and we ask for your continued support in fiscal year (FY) 2017.

For the FY 2017 Appropriations process, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to protect and sustain funding for research to develop new global health products and innovations by funding the Global Health Programs account under the State Department at \$6.195 billion and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) at \$3.726 billion—and to fully fund each disease or population-specific program under this account—while also honoring US commitments to multilateral global health and development programs.

The United States has long played a leading role in research and innovation for new technologies to combat global health challenges. Global health research through USAID and the State Department has supported such breakthroughs as new treatments for malaria, innovative microbicides to prevent transmission of HIV in low-resource settings, and interventions to help women and infants in childbirth.

It is critical to sustain and build on this leadership: More than 80 percent of Americans say that it is important for the United States to work to improve health globally through R&D.

In addition, as our world becomes more interconnected, it is clear that global health R&D provides direct benefits to US citizens and that the health of Americans is dependent on the health of populations abroad. Evidenced by the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa, health crises abroad can become health crises at home, and protecting the well-being of Americans requires a globally-focused approach. Today's investments in global health innovations to prevent and treat diseases in the developing world such as extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis, malaria, and NTDs will save millions of lives in the future.

With less than one-half of one percent of the federal budget, USAID works around the world to support US goals in global health and development and strengthen relationships with key US partners. Global health R&D at USAID has supported the development, introduction, and scale-up of affordable health products, as well as policies and practices appropriate for addressing health issues in developing countries. In this work, USAID harnesses its comparative advantage of strong on-the-ground presence in low- and middle-income countries to support late-stage research and product development of global health technologies appropriate for the low-resource settings where they will be used. **We applaud the efforts that USAID has made in fostering innovation in health technologies, including:**

- Partnering across government agencies and among private-sector partners to identify breakthrough innovations to combat the 2014 Ebola epidemic and better prepare us for future outbreaks. The Fighting Ebola Grand Challenge is supporting the development of 14 innovations identified for their potential to reinforce the response to current and future Ebola outbreaks, including novel personal protective equipment.
- Collaborating with private-sector partners across the country and around the world. Through product development partnerships—a unique form of public-private partnership designed to develop new tools for neglected diseases—USAID supports nonprofit product developers in their R&D to improve health conditions around the world. One success of this model has been the development of a low-cost meningitis vaccine, specifically designed for the millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa at risk for this deadly disease. This vaccine—MenAfriVac®—is having real world lifesaving impact: More than 151 million people have been vaccinated since introduction in 2010, and it is expected to save more than \$570 million in treatment costs over the next decade.
- Advancing global health R&D partnerships with other governments and philanthropic donors. USAID coordinates with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada, the government of Norway, and other donors through the Saving Lives at Birth grand challenge, focused on developing lifesaving innovations for mothers and newborns. Innovations advanced through this contest include a rapid-results, portable HIV test and easy-to-use, pre-measured, at-home treatments for HIV/AIDS.
- Supporting research to develop safe, effective, accessible, and acceptable tools for use in the developing world to prevent HIV—including microbicides based on antiretroviral drugs, which have shown the potential to prevent HIV infection in women—and HIV vaccines.
- Funding the development of new anti-malaria treatments, including Tafenoquine, a drug candidate

that is currently in phase 3 clinical trials and is a potential single-dose treatment for the radical cure of *P. vivax* malaria.

- Playing a key role in the global effort to fight tuberculosis by supporting research to develop new therapeutics and providing expertise on implementation and scale-up of the products that are ultimately licensed.

Ongoing investments in the development of new vaccines, drugs, microbicides, and other tools have the potential to greatly accelerate efforts to address HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, diarrheal disease, and pneumonia, as well as improve maternal and reproductive health. As funding for the development of these new technologies typically flows through individual USAID global health accounts, robust funding of global health programs allows investment in critically needed innovation.

We strongly recommend that you fund the Global Health Programs account under the State Department and USAID at a minimum of \$6.195 billion and \$3.726 billion respectively, and urge the agency to invest in research and development for new global health innovations in each of the disease and condition areas within the account. To this end, we support at minimum:

HIV/AIDS	\$350 million
Malaria	\$874 million
Maternal and Child Health	\$880 million
Neglected Tropical Diseases	\$125 million
Nutrition	\$230 million
Tuberculosis	\$400 million
Family Planning in all accounts	\$1 billion
PEPFAR	\$4.845 billion

We also support funding for USAID’s Annual Report on Global Health R&D and commend its valuable role in detailing the impact of USAID-led global health R&D on the agency’s overarching global health objectives.

In addition, we stress the critical contributions of the Center for Accelerating Innovation and Impact in supporting cutting-edge strategies for the development and scale-up of priority global health interventions and ask that the center receive continued support.

Continued investment to support research throughout each of USAID’s global health accounts is critical to progress in global health. Such investments can ensure that the progress made in global health over the past decade, thanks to increased support from the United States, is not reversed.

In addition to bringing lifesaving tools to those who need them most, global health R&D is a smart economic investment for the United States. Investment in global health R&D drives job creation, spurs business activity, and benefits academic institutions: **Nearly 64 cents of every US dollar spent on global health R&D goes directly to US-based researchers.**

We stand ready to work with you to advance US leadership in global health and global health innovation, and ask that support for global health R&D not come at the expense of other humanitarian assistance and development accounts. Now more than ever, Congress must make smart budget

decisions. Global health research that improves the lives of people around the world—while at the same time supporting US interests, creating jobs, and spurring economic growth at home—is a win-win.

Please do not hesitate to contact GHTC Director Erin Will Morton at ewmorton@ghtcoalition.org or (202) 540-4379, if you have questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Aeras



American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene



AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention



Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative*



Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation



Global Health Council



HarvestPlus



International AIDS Vaccine Initiative



Infectious Diseases Society of America



IVCC



International Vaccine Institute



Medicines for Malaria Venture



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Treatment Action Group



TB Alliance



Washington Global Health Alliance