

September 21, 2020

Chairwoman Nita Lowey 2365 Rayburn House Office Building Washington DC 20515

Ranking Member Kay Granger 1026 Longworth House Office Building Washington DC 20515

Ranking Member Harold Rogers 2406 Rayburn House Office Building Washington DC 20515 Chairman Richard Shelby 304 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Patrick Leahy 437 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Lindsey Graham 290 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Ranking Member Rogers, Senator Shelby, Senator Leahy, and Senator Graham:

As American leaders of faith, we write with deep appreciation for you as leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and Subcommittees on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS). We are thankful to the House Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) for passing their Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) appropriations bill, and we hope that the Senate Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs will soon pass their FY21 appropriations bill, which will signal strong backing for the Global Fund to Fight Against AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria. That leadership puts into action what we are called to do to help the most vulnerable.

So too, as Congress works to pass a continuing resolution (CR) for Fiscal Year 2021, we ask that you maintain funding at the FY20 level of \$1.56 billion for the Global Fund – to follow through with its commitment to the Global Fund's three-year goals to confront and ultimately conquer the epidemics.

In addition to finishing the job on FY21 appropriations, we urge you to provide robust funding in the next emergency supplemental bill for the international response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including additional resources to protect fragile gains in responding to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Specifically, we ask for \$20 billion for international assistance to prevent, respond to, and mitigate the impacts of this devastating pandemic to be included in the next supplemental appropriation to respond to COVID-19, including in this a U.S. contribution of \$4 billion over two years for the Global Fund's COVID-19 Response Mechanism.

We are deeply concerned about the devastating impact of COVID-19 on our communities at home and abroad. We call on U.S. leadership to address the pandemic's impacts and protect against a future resurgence. Those most impacted are already disproportionately vulnerable to infectious diseases. COVID-19 risks undermining decades of progress against epidemics that kill millions of people every year: AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Researchers at the Imperial College London estimate that in heavily affected countries, COVID-19 could result in a 10 percent increase in death from HIV, 20 percent in TB and 36 percent in malaria.

We know the life-saving impact of U.S. investments in global health. For instance, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has helped save more than 38 million lives from the three deadliest infectious diseases since 2002 while strengthening health systems to cope with new pandemics. The Global Fund has created a new COVID-19 Response Mechanism to quickly direct funding to help countries address COVID-19 and mitigate damage to their AIDS, TB and malaria programs. This accountable partnership is a central asset in larger emergency international funding. Unfortunately, by the end of September 2020, that COVID-19 Response Mechanism will run out of money to respond to the crises brought by COVID-19, and it will be unable to do future work without robust contributions from Global Fund donors.

It is right that Congress is focused on saving American lives and livelihoods from COVID-19, and your leadership will be essential to addressing the growing need. We are aware that our communities and congregations will never be truly safe from COVID-19 until the threat is confronted globally.

The vital sustained U.S. support for the Global Fund and other important global health priorities is a powerful sign of American commitment to finish the job in the fight to vanquish the HIV, TB, and malaria epidemics for good, which we strongly appreciate, support, and recognize. And tackling COVID-19's devastating impact on communities and fragile health systems in Africa and elsewhere is urgent to make that possible. Millions threatened by these diseases could then be freed from fear and share their Godgiven gifts with humankind.

Sincerely,

Senator Bill Frist, MD

Wellow H. Frist, M.D.

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