

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 30, 2012

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, The Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
127 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Cochran, Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Member Graham:

Thank you for your longstanding commitment to improving the health of women and children in the developing world. As you prepare the Fiscal Year 2013 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you include robust funding for Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition programs.

Our nation's Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition programs allow for the delivery of life-saving services for newborns, children and mothers throughout the developing world. These programs support critical initiatives that impact millions—from providing access to skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care to training community health-workers to treat preventable but deadly illnesses such as polio, pneumonia and diarrhea. These programs also support the Global Alliance for Vaccinations Initiative (GAVI) and child nutrition programs.

To date, U.S. leadership and funding to improve the survival and health of mothers and children have delivered unprecedented success worldwide. With the help of these investments, the annual number of deaths of children under five dropped from nearly 13 million in 1990 to 7.2 million in 2011. And between 1990 and 2008, maternal mortality dropped by one-third worldwide.

Despite these successes, much more remains to be done. Malnutrition is the underlying cause in one-third of child deaths around the globe. Those children who survive but are malnourished have shorter lifespans, are less likely to be able to fight off disease, and have reduced earning potential.

In addition, according to the World Health Organization, more than 1,000 women die every day due to preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. When a mother dies, her children are less likely to go to school, receive immunizations and consume a healthy diet. Children who lose their mothers in their first two years of life are up to ten times more likely to die in childhood than children whose mothers survive.

There are also significant economic costs associated with these largely preventable problems. The international economic impact of maternal, child and newborn deaths is estimated to be more than \$15 billion annually due to diminished productivity, and recent studies have shown that as much as 3 percent of the gross domestic product of a country is wiped out due to child malnutrition.

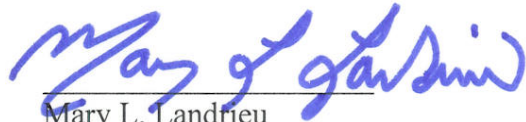
That is why it is so critical that the U.S. maintain robust funding for Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition programs. A reduction in the United States' support for the health and survival of women and children at this time would have an immediate and devastating effect on many in the developing world and would fail to capitalize on the tremendous progress and enormous goodwill generated by decades of U.S. investments.

Thank you for your attention to this important request.

Sincerely,



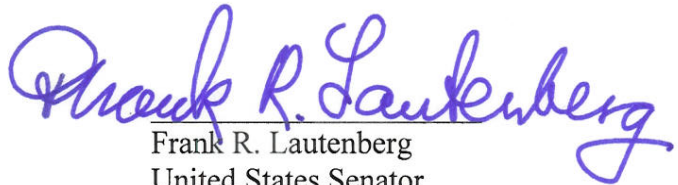
Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator



Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



Frank R. Lautenberg
United States Senator



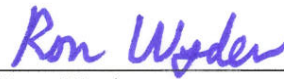
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Kirsten E. Gillibrand

Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator

Mark Begich

Mark Begich
United States Senator

Chris Coons

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator