

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2021

The Honorable Barbara Lee
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on State, Foreign Operations and
Related Programs
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on State, Foreign Operations and
Related Programs
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Lee and Ranking Member Rogers:

Thank you for your continued leadership on the House Committee on Appropriations and its Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs. As you begin to prepare the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), we respectfully request a significant increase in funding for the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and strong support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) in advance of its Seventh Replenishment in 2022. We look to you for crucial and timely support of these programs as PEPFAR and the Global Fund work towards the rapid acceleration of HIV prevention and treatment in order to reach the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

U.S. leadership through PEPFAR and other bilateral investments at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), along with multilateral investments in the Global Fund, have been transformative in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and the results are astounding. In 2020, PEPFAR supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for 17.2 million people. Through PEPFAR support, over 6.7 million orphans, vulnerable children and their caregivers accessed critical care and support services, and since its inception, more than 2.8 million new infections have been averted in children.¹

By working hand in hand with countries and partners like PEPFAR, the Global Fund’s efforts have saved more than 38 million lives since its inception in 2002. In 2019, the Global Fund supported 20.1 million people on antiretroviral treatment for HIV, treated 5.7 million people for TB, and distributed 160 million insecticide-treated bed nets for malaria prevention. Despite the tremendous progress made on HIV globally, every week, around 6,000 young women aged 15-24 are infected with HIV worldwide. Global Fund investments in programs that support adolescent girls and young women in 13 priority countries increased 24% for the 2020-2022 allocation compared to the previous cycle with a total investment of \$3.26 billion. Progress on the TB epidemic hinges on finding the over three million people “missed” by health systems

¹ PEPFAR, *PEPFAR’s Latest Global Results*, 2020. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PEPFAR-Latest-Results-Fact-Sheet-2020.pdf>

each year. The Global Fund is focusing on 20 countries that account for 82 percent of missing people with TB globally to find and treat additional people with TB in line with the targets from the 2018 UN High Level Meeting on TB. The Global Fund helps fragile states which face flaring epidemics like HIV and TB, such as Bangladesh, where its catalytic funding supports innovative programs to detect cases of tuberculosis in the community and private health facilities that would otherwise be missed by public health systems.²

Despite significant progress in the fight against HIV/AIDS, the work is not over. 12 million people –nearly a third of those living with HIV – are still not able to access the antiretroviral therapy they need to survive and thrive.³ Only roughly half of HIV-positive children currently access treatment, which is especially disturbing because half of them will die before their second birthday if they remain untreated.⁴ 1.7 million people are still newly infected with HIV annually, a number that remains stagnant and well below the 2020 global goal of less than 500,000 new infections a year.⁵

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo years of progress and to derail momentum towards ending AIDS. It is disrupting essential health services, leading to secondary impacts of the disease. This is especially evident in HIV testing and prevention services in many countries. Recent PEPFAR data has shown drops in the number of people accessing HIV testing services by as much as 40% and the number of newly diagnosed people enrolled in treatment has fallen by 25%. Additional declines in other key prevention programs such as Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) over one year fell 74% due to the lockdowns and we are seeing similar impacts on DREAMS programming for adolescent girls.⁶ Countries also reported a 25% decrease in the number of pregnant women accessing prevention of mother to child transmission services.⁷ Disruptions to global supply chains has led to further challenges, including stock outs of contraceptive commodities and pediatric treatments. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to disruptions to global supply chains and rising rates of gender-based violence has had other far-reaching implications for the PEPFAR and Global Fund-funded responses to global AIDS.

PEPFAR and the Global Fund have been working tirelessly to alleviate these impacts, but significant investments are needed to effectively address both HIV and COVID-19. These programs are leading global efforts to not only improve HIV care, but also enable countries to improve the overall health of their citizens by creating a lasting infrastructure and local community capacity that positions partner countries to respond to a range of health challenges and threats, including COVID-19. Providing robust support for PEPFAR and Global Fund bolsters the United States' standing and cooperative relationship with the world, increases our ability to strengthen health systems to mitigate disease outbreaks, and also drives progress in combatting tuberculosis and malaria.

² The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, *Results Report 2020*, 2020. https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/10103/corporate_2020resultsreport_report_en.pdf

³ UNAIDS, <https://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

⁴ UNAIDS, *The Gap Report*,

https://files.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2014/UNAIDS_Gap_report_en.pdf

⁵ UNAIDS, <https://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

⁶ PEPFAR, <https://data.pepfar.gov/dashboards>

⁷ UNAIDS, *Prevailing Against Pandemics by Putting People at the Centre*, 2020.

https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/prevailing-against-pandemics_en.pdf

When properly resourced, PEPFAR holds great promise as a platform that can provide uninterrupted essential HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services while also supporting countries' COVID-19 responses. PEPFAR can mitigate some of the adverse effects of COVID-19 on HIV services and PLHIV themselves by building upon lessons learned through 17 years of hard-fought gains. Its responsive, data-driven efforts are saving lives -- but they require sufficient funding to continue to do so.

These successes are only possible because of the longstanding bipartisan congressional and presidential support for the programs. With your leadership, we could end AIDS around the world, and we look forward to working with your committee to achieve these goals. Thank you for considering our request and for your ongoing commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Sincerely,



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

/s/ Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

/s/ Nanette Dias Barragán
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

/s/ Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

/s/ André Carson
Member of Congress

/s/ Judy Chu
Member of Congress

/s/ Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

/s/ Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

/s/ Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

/s/ Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

/s/ Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

/s/ Bill Foster
Member of Congress

/s/ Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

/s/ Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

/s/ Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress

/s/ Karen Bass
Member of Congress

/s/ Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

/s/ G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

/s/ Sean Casten
Member of Congress

/s/ David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

/s/ Jim Cooper
Member of Congress

/s/ Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress

/s/ Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

/s/ Ted Deutch
Member of Congress

/s/ Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

/s/ John Garamendi
Member of Congress

/s/ Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

/s/ Jim Himes
Member of Congress

/s/ Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

/s/ Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

/s/ Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

/s/ Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

/s/ Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

/s/ Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

/s/ Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/ Jim Costa
Member of Congress

/s/ Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

/s/ Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

/s/ Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

/s/ Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress

/s/ Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

/s/ Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

/s/ Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

/s/ Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

/s/ Ron Kind
Member of Congress

/s/ Al Lawson
Member of Congress

/s/ Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

/s/ Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

/s/ Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

/s/ Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

/s/ Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress

/s/ Katie Porter
Member of Congress

/s/ Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

/s/ Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

/s/ Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

/s/ Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress

/s/ William R. Keating
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/s/ Rick Larsen
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/s/ Andy Levin
Member of Congress

/s/ Tom Malinowski
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/s/ A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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/s/ Chris Pappas
Member of Congress

/s/ Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

/s/ Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress

/s/ Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress

/s/ John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress

/s/ Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

/s/ Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

/s/ Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

/s/ Young Kim
Member of Congress

/s/ John B. Larson
Member of Congress

/s/ Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

/s/ Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

/s/ James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

/s/ Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

/s/ Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

/s/ Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/ Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

/s/ C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

/s/ Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress

/s/ David Scott
Member of Congress

/s/ Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

/s/ Albio Sires
Member of Congress

/s/ Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress

/s/ Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

/s/ Adam Smith
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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/s/ Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

/s/ Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

/s/ Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

/s/ John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

/s/ Don Young
Member of Congress