

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2022

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

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Ranking Members
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 2023 (FY23), we respectfully request a significant increase 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 2021, PEPFAR supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for 18.96 million people. Through PEPFAR support, over 7.1 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 44 million lives since its inception in 2002. In 2020, the Global Fund supported 21.9 million people on antiretroviral treatment for HIV, treated 4.7 million people for TB, and distributed 188 million insecticide-treated bed nets for malaria prevention. Despite the tremendous progress made on HIV globally, every week, nearly 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 nearly three million people "missed" by health systems each year. By focusing on 20 countries that account for a majority of missing people with TB globally, Global Fund investments contributed to over one million additional TB case notifications by the end of 2019. The Global Fund helps fragile states which face flaring

¹ PEPFAR, *PEPFAR's Latest Global Results*, 2021. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PEPFAR-Latest-Global-Results_WAD-2021.pdf

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. 10 million people – over a quarter 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 1.5 million people are still newly infected with HIV annually, a number that remains essentially 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 Global Fund data has shown drops in the number of people accessing HIV testing services by over 20%, compared to 2019. The number of people reached with HIV prevention services overall declined by 11% and other key prevention programs such as Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) fell almost 30% due to the lockdowns.⁶ In 2020, 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 The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, *Results Report 2021*, 2021. https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/11304/corporate_2021resultsreport_report_en.pdf

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 19 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



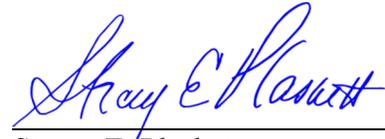
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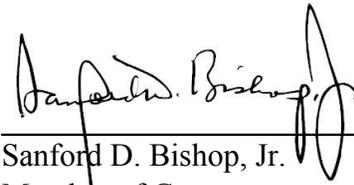
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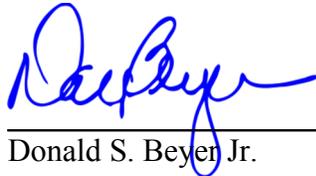
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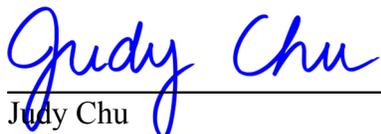
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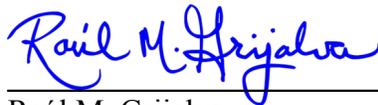
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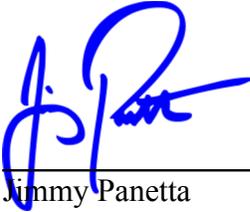
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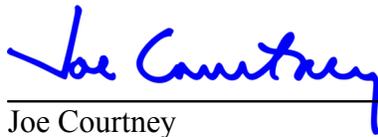
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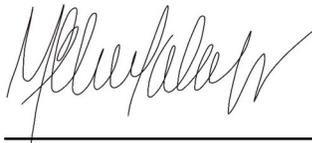
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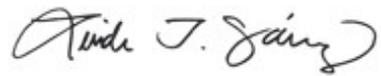
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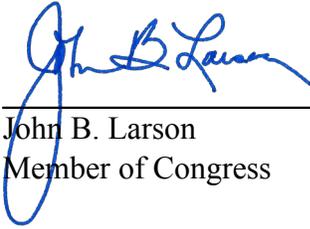
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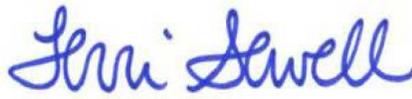
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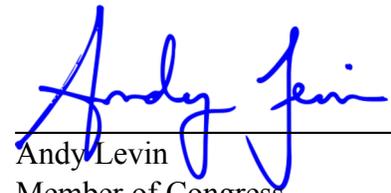
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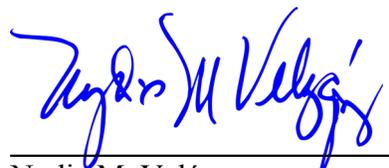
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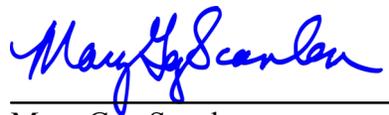
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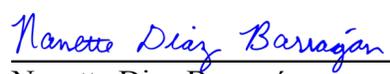
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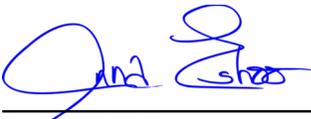
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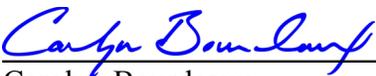
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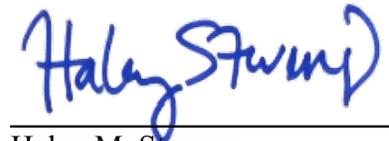
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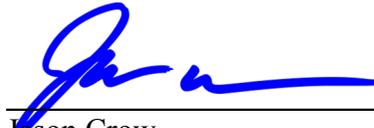
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