April 30, 2024

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chair
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Diaz-Balart, and Ranking Member Lee,

As you craft legislation making appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2025, we respectfully ask that you prioritize investments in the fight to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) which again is the leading infectious disease killer globally.

We are at a critical moment in the fight against tuberculosis and have the opportunity to end this disease as a public health threat by the end of this decade – but only with appropriate resources and global political commitment. Last fall, the U.S. led the charge to build global consensus for the political declaration at the U.N. high level meeting on Tuberculosis, and pushed for specific, measurable targets in the fight against TB. World leaders, including the U.S., committed to reaching 45 million people with TB testing and treatment by 2027. Additionally, the U.S. unveiled a new TB initiative with lower drug costs, funding for conflict settings, and a localization pledge.

Thanks to your support, Congress has year on year increased resources for the fight against TB, a clear demonstration of the strong bipartisan support for these programs. With the historic strain on TB programs as the frontline response against airborne infectious diseases, we respectfully request $1 billion for bilateral TB programming at USAID and $225 million need for TB programs at the CDC. We again urge you to increase TB funding for fighting this debilitating disease globally and in the U.S., in addition to maintaining your ongoing support for a robust U.S. contribution to the Global Fund on AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria—some 20 percent of which supports work on TB.

Many believe TB is a disease of the past, but that is not the case. TB continues to be a public health concern due to a lack of resources to properly identify, treat, and prevent all forms of the disease and develop new, more effective tools to fight TB. In fact, TB is resurging as the foremost lethal infectious disease in most low- and
middle-income countries, and disproportionately affects people in poorest and vulnerable communities both in the U.S. and around the world.

The 2023 World Health Organization (WHO) Global TB Report found that TB sickened 10.6 million people and killed 1.3 million in 2022. In the U.S., this airborne disease remains a significant public health issue as every single state continues to report cases of TB each year and most states saw an increase in TB in 2022. According to the CDC, there are up to 13 million individuals in the U.S. with latent TB infections, a future reservoir of active TB cases.

This resurgence of TB must be met with redoubled efforts to strengthen our domestic and global efforts to identify, treat, and prevent tuberculosis, including drug resistant TB and TB infection. Delays or incomplete treatment for TB can have severe consequences; drug resistant TB is a leading cause of death from antimicrobial resistance (AMR) globally, including multidrug resistant (MDR) and extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB which are significantly more difficult and expensive to treat, with higher rates of treatment failure.

However, TB deaths are entirely preventable. If found and treated, drug-sensitive TB is a curable disease with a simple round of antibiotics. TB continues to be a public health concern due to a lack of resources to properly identify, treat, and prevent all forms of the disease and develop new, more effective tools to fight TB. Strong funding is critical for research, including efforts to develop new diagnostic, treatment, and prevention tools. New, more effective vaccines that protect adolescents, adults, and infants from TB, are crucial to TB elimination efforts, yet investment in TB vaccine product development is severely lacking at a critical juncture with promising candidates poised to move into efficacy trials. Additional funding would also enable CDC and USAID programs to pursue active case finding to treat TB infection before it progresses to active disease, helping save millions of lives for a fraction of the cost.

USAID and the CDC are leading the global and U.S. response to this debilitating and deadly disease, and we are proud that Congress has consistently supported their efforts on a bipartisan basis. In order to maintain our role as a world leader in the fight against TB and make significant progress towards ending TB globally, we ask you to again support full funding for domestic and international TB programs. TB anywhere is TB everywhere and a coordinated and comprehensive approach for supporting global and domestic TB challenges is needed to address the TB pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress

Ann Wagner
Member of Congress
Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress

Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

Andy Kim
Member of Congress

Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

Katie Porter
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Aumua Amata Coleman
Radewagen
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Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress
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