

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 9, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman

U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair

U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Coons
Chair
State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Vice Chairwoman Collins, Chairman Coons, and Ranking Member Graham:

As you determine priorities for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that you provide robust funding for the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) account, including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Nutrition account, both within Global Health Programs (GHP) at USAID. Adequate funding for the MCH and Nutrition accounts is necessary to preserve effective, evidence-based, poverty-focused assistance that saves lives and helps strengthen economies in low-income countries. We appreciate this Committee's long-standing record of supporting life-saving investments in global child and maternal health and nutrition.

Since 2000, through USAID investment, under-five child mortality has dropped by 58 percent and maternal mortality by 42 percent across USAID's priority countries. While reductions in mortality rates for women and children are two of the biggest success stories in international development, progress has slowed for more than a decade. Every year, around 5 million children under age five die from mainly preventable and treatable diseases, with malnutrition as the underlying cause of roughly half of these deaths. Moreover, nearly 300,000 women die annually of preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Additional investments will spur progress against these preventable deaths and continue to build America's legacy and leadership in maternal and child health and nutrition.

The MCH account supports the delivery of cost-effective, proven services in countries with the highest burden of preventable maternal and child deaths. Over the past decade, USAID programs have helped save more than six million lives; since 2012, USAID's life-saving investments have enabled 57 million women to give birth in a health facility, reached 44 million newborns with care after delivery, provided 127 million treatments to children for diarrhea and pneumonia, and trained 14 million health workers in maternal and child health and nutrition. Immunization against the leading killers of children have been core to the MCH account, including global campaigns to eradicate both measles and polio, which is now only endemic in two countries. A critical portion of the MCH account now also supports Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, a public-private partnership that has helped to halve child mortality in lower-income countries since 2000

by immunizing an entire generation. Gavi has helped vaccinate more than one billion children, preventing more than 17 million future deaths.

Resources for Gavi bolster efforts to continue necessary immunization and deliver vaccines to lower-income countries; USAID's technical support is essential to support these efforts and enable equitable access to vaccines. As Gavi works to develop its investment opportunity for the next strategic period, including the introduction of newly approved malaria vaccines, increases to Gavi should not come at the expense of bilateral funding.

The Nutrition account supports nutrition programs for women and children, focusing on the first 1,000 days between pregnancy and a child's second birthday, when interventions have an outsized impact on a child's development. Severely malnourished children are much more likely to have weakened immune systems and are at risk of permanent physical and mental stunting, which prevents them from reaching their full educational, social and earning potential. In aggregate, malnutrition costs the world \$3.5 trillion in lost productivity and healthcare costs each year. The Nutrition account supports a targeted set of high-impact interventions that can prevent the worst effects of severe malnutrition. In 2022 alone, USAID reached 32 million children and 11 million pregnant women with cost-effective nutrition interventions like breastfeeding support, prenatal vitamins, and vitamin A supplementation as a part of the agency's focus on strengthening primary health care systems. USAID also provides severely malnourished children with therapeutic foods that they need to survive.

The ongoing global food crisis, fueled by conflict, as well as extreme weather and economic shocks, continues to threaten the lives of women and children globally. Full funding of the Nutrition account is critical for saving lives and reaching USAID's goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

To improve global maternal and child health and nutrition, we respectfully urge you to provide robust funding for the MCH account, including Gavi, and the Nutrition account in GHP for FY 2025.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure that America maintains its leadership in this global effort.

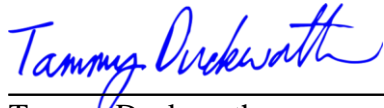
Sincerely,



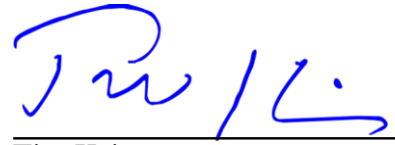
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United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



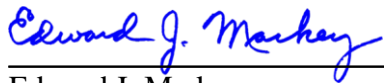
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Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



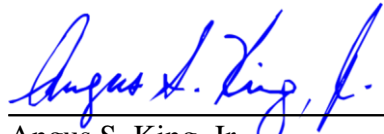
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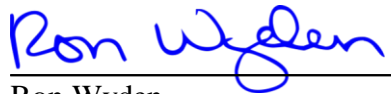
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United States Senator



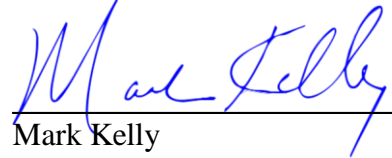
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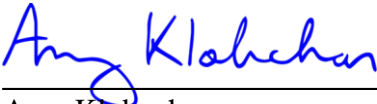
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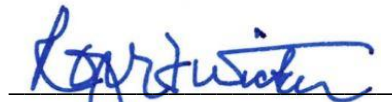
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