

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Schatz:

As you determine priorities for the Fiscal Year 2027 State, Foreign Operations and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that you provide increased funding for Nutrition and Maternal and Child Health, which includes funding for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, within the Global Health Programs Account.

We appreciate this Committee's long-standing support for life-saving global nutrition and maternal and child health investments. Since 2000, U.S.-supported programs have contributed to a 58 percent decline in under-five child mortality and a 42 percent decline in maternal mortality in target countries. However, progress has slowed over the past decade as global funding has stagnated. The most recent global estimates show that 4.9 million children under the age of five died from largely preventable and treatable causes in 2024, with malnutrition as the underlying factor of roughly half of these deaths. Moreover, nearly 300,000 women die annually of preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, including lack of access to skilled birth attendants and postnatal care.

The MCH account supports delivery of cost-effective, proven services in countries where the burden of maternal and child deaths is the highest. Over the past decade, these programs have helped save more than 6 million lives; since 2012, the U.S. government's lifesaving investments have enabled 67.8 million women to give birth in a health facility, reached 55.4 million newborns with care after delivery, provided 139.5 million treatments to children for diarrhea and pneumonia, and trained 14.2 million health workers in maternal and child health and nutrition. This was done with the bipartisan support of Congress, which regularly increased funding for these programs.

Strong MCH and nutrition funding advances U.S. strategic interests by promoting stability, strengthening partner economies, and reinforcing accountable, country-led health systems. The 2025 America First Global Health Strategy emphasizes these priorities and must build on the decades of progress.

A critical portion of the MCH account supports Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, a public-private partnership that has helped reduce child mortality by half in lower-income countries since 2000 by immunizing an entire generation. Gavi has helped vaccinate more than 1.2 billion children, preventing nearly 21 million deaths. U.S. leadership has been central to this success. In 2024, all countries fully met their co-financing obligation for Gavi-supported vaccines, with 6 waivers granted due to humanitarian crises. Fifty-five vaccine programs initially introduced with Gavi

funding are now fully self-financed by countries, demonstrating sustainability and country ownership. As the world's leading purchaser of U.S.-produced vaccines, Gavi also supports American manufacturing jobs and helps prevent outbreaks from reaching U.S. shores, strengthening global health security. The U.S. must continue to contribute strong annual funding for Gavi to enable them to reach the goal of immunizing an additional one billion children.

The Nutrition account targets the first 1,000 days, from pregnancy to a child's second birthday, when interventions have the greatest lifelong impact. The account supports a set of evidence-based, cost-effective interventions that can prevent the worst effects of malnutrition. In 2023, U.S. bilateral nutrition programs reached more than 28 million children and 11 million pregnant women with high-impact interventions like prenatal vitamin supplementation, breastfeeding support, vitamin A distribution, and therapeutic foods (RUTF) for severely malnourished children. 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. Targeted U.S. investments help reduce the global economic burden of malnutrition, estimated at \$3.5 trillion annually.

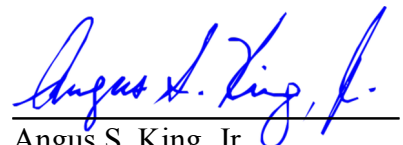
Full funding of the Nutrition account and MCH account, including Gavi, is critical for saving lives and reaching the U.S. government's goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths. To improve the health and wellbeing of women and children globally, we respectfully urge you to provide increased funding for these accounts within Global Health Programs in FY2027.

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

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



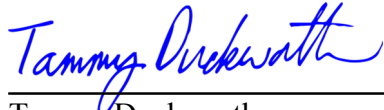
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



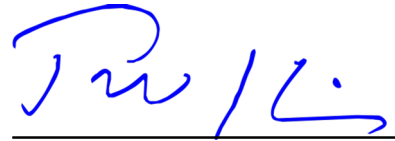
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United States Senator



Alex Padilla
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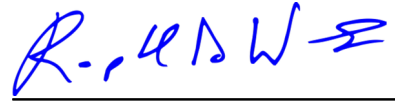
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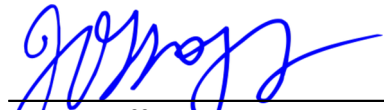
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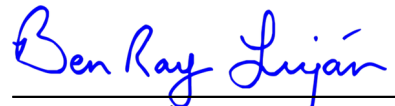
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United States Senator



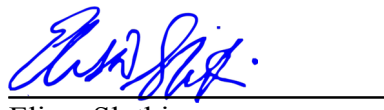
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United States Senator



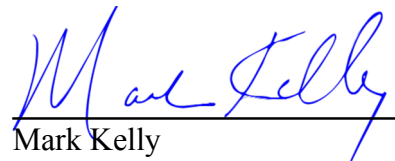
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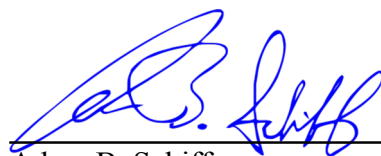
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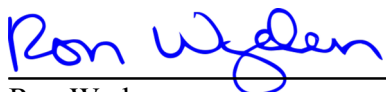
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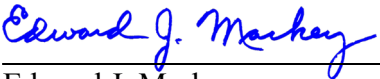
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