

Take Action! Urge Congress to Support FY2015 Foreign Aid Funding Priorities

Annually, members of Congress have the opportunity to voice their support for health and development programs that save lives and improve the livelihood of the poorest around the world through the foreign aid funding bill, known as the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. This legislation provides funding for global health and nutrition programs, basic education, microfinance, and other development assistance. Each and every member of Congress can play a role in shaping this bill by writing to and speaking with the leadership of Foreign Operations Sub-Committee of Appropriations before they begin drafting the spending legislation.

The International Affairs budget accounts for just over 1 percent of the national budget. However, poverty-focused development assistance, which is part of the International Affairs budget, is only about half of that and is too often a target of severe cuts. For our members of Congress to be bold in defending poverty-focused programs, they need to hear from their constituents. **Your voice in support of these programs needs to be heard in Washington to build the political will needed to protect funding and to save and improve lives.**

Write letters to your members of Congress urging them write to and speak with the committee leaders who determine foreign aid funding priorities — the Chair (from the majority party) and Ranking Member (from the minority party) of the House and Senate Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittees.

Take Action! Write a Letter to Your Senators and Representative:

- ✓ **Introduce yourself** as a RESULTS volunteer and a constituent. Acknowledge any actions that your member has already taken to support our work or other actions on poverty and thank him/her.
- ✓ Urge your representative/senators to write to and speak with the leadership of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee in support of anti-poverty priorities in the fiscal year 2015 foreign aid funding bill.
Foreign Operations Subcommittee Leadership:
House: Chair Kay Granger (R-TX); ranking member Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Senate: Chair Patrick Leahy (D-VT); ranking member Lindsey Graham (R-SC)
- ✓ **Make your funding request.** Tailor your request. Choose one or more issues that your member is likely to support. Use the separate Appropriations Request Sheets for additional issue background. Here is sample language to include in your letter:

Members of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee will soon be considering spending levels for life-saving global development work for the fiscal year 2015 foreign aid spending bill. I am writing to request that you speak and write to the leadership of this subcommittee and ask that they include the following funding levels in their bill. This funding represents both a compassionate and pragmatic foreign aid request.

In the area of **Global Health**, please include:

- \$1.65 billion for the multilateral **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria**;
- \$400 million for **bilateral Tuberculosis** control efforts; and
- \$800 million for **Maternal and Child Health**, including \$200 million for the **GAVI Alliance** to support new and underutilized vaccines for children, and additionally \$200 million for **Nutrition** in global health.

In the area of **Education for All**, please include \$125 million for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) within basic education assistance.

In the area of **Economic Opportunity**, please request the inclusion of report language from the appropriations committee that:

- Recommends that USAID work with partner organizations to increase uptake of poverty measurement tools developed and/or approved by USAID to ensure microfinance funding is reaching the very poor and;
- Directs USAID to increase investment in microfinance in sub-Saharan Africa within the USAID microfinance and microenterprise program to reach the poorest and most marginalized (*additional language available in the microfinance appropriations memo*).

- ✓ Request a reply and include your contact information. If you don't know the aide that handles foreign affairs, call the office and ask or look them up on the RESULTS website: <http://capwiz.com/results/dbq/officials/>. E-mail and fax your letter if possible. Call and make sure the aide that handles these issues received your letter. .

Navigating the Appropriations Process

There are a number of steps you can take to help make your appropriations request successful:

1. **Check the deadline.** The Appropriations Committees set deadlines to receive requests from members of Congress and most congressional offices set their own internal deadlines for appropriations requests from constituents well before these dates. Ask your congressional offices about their deadlines so you can submit your request beforehand. Even if the deadline has passed, submit your request anyway.
2. **Check the form.** Members of Congress receive many appropriations requests. To standardize this process, some members have a form to complete, either on paper or online. Check your representative's and senators' web sites or call to see if there is a form to complete. *Don't hesitate to ask RESULTS staff for help filling it out.*
3. **Schedule a meeting.** Sending a letter is an important way to show support, but a meeting with your member of Congress or their staff can make your request stand out and demonstrate a deep support for poverty-focused foreign aid among constituents.
4. **Follow up.** After your request is submitted, follow up with the foreign policy legislative aide to see if he/she requires any more information to complete the request. Tell the aide that you would like to know if your requests are included in the Congressperson's request to the appropriators and ask how and when you can find that out. Stay with your request until you know what happens.

Summary of Fiscal Year 2015 Requests

For background on each of these requests, please review the corresponding Appropriations Request Sheets, which contains additional background on each issue that you can use to support your request. ***We strongly suggest that you do not include every issue in your request.*** Select one or more issues that you think your member is most likely to support.

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$1.65 billion for the Global Fund to maintain and expand life-saving prevention and treatment programs.
Tuberculosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$400 million for scaling up critical U.S. supported efforts to control and treat TB and drug-resistant TB.
Child Health and Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$800 million for Maternal and Child Health. • Include \$200 million for the GAVI Alliance for new and underused vaccines in MCH. • Provide \$200 million for nutrition programs in the global health account.
Education for All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide \$125 million for the Global Partnership for Education to cost-effectively support access to quality education for all children.
Microfinance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include report language to direct microfinance and microenterprise funds to the very poor.

In addition to saving lives and empowering people to build pathways out of poverty, the International Affairs budget and poverty-focused development assistance also contributes to U.S. economic growth and boosts our national security:

- U.S. exports to developing countries have grown six times faster than exports to major economies, making developing nations the future of U.S. trade.
- Developing nations purchase fifty percent of U.S. exports.
- For every five percent decline in income growth in a developing country, the likelihood of violent conflict or war within the next year increases by 10 percent.

To download additional background on each of these issues and other information, please visit our Appropriations resource page: http://www.results.org/issues/global_poverty_campaigns/appropriations/