

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 31, 2017

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
127 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6031

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
127 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy:

Thank you for your continued leadership in supporting State Department programs that are essential to our national security, diplomacy, and humanitarian efforts. We write to request that you provide robust funding for bilateral TB control in the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs appropriations bill. Sustained funding would build on the success of the previous Administration's 2015 National Action Plan to Combat Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB), and would help stem the spread of this killer disease both globally and domestically.

TB kills more individuals globally than any other infectious disease. More than 10 million people fell ill due to TB in 2015—including one million children—resulting in 1.8 million deaths that year. TB morbidity overwhelmingly impacts low- and middle-income countries, which account for 95% of annual deaths. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), the disease also has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations: it is the leading killer of HIV-positive individuals, accounting for 35% of HIV deaths. The WHO also estimates that some 480,000 individuals contracted MDR-TB in 2015. Though global incidence of TB has decreased by 1.5% per year since 2000, it is estimated that a decrease of 4-5% per year is required to achieve the WHO's 2020 milestone for its *End TB Strategy*.

Since 2000, efforts by the U.S. and our global partners to treat and prevent TB have proven cost effective and have prevented the loss of an estimated 49 million lives and innumerable infections. Despite significant gains, there is much work to be done, especially as new surveillance methods in countries like India reveal a higher prevalence of TB infections than previously estimated. International aid from countries like the U.S. is essential to bringing down infection rates, as TB programs in low-income countries rely on foreign assistance for almost 90% of their funding. This is in addition to the severe need for additional research into treatment and prevention methods.

The United States has long been a leader on global health programs, like those that combat the spread of MDR-TB. U.S. foreign assistance is a pillar of American diplomacy. TB and other diseases do not recognize borders, and U.S. efforts to protect global health in turn protect domestic health. Additionally, our global health efforts strengthen relationships with

international partners, further political stability in countries ravaged by the disease, and exemplify U.S. moral leadership.

We recognize that the President's budget for FY18 makes drastic cuts to American foreign assistance programs. However, we also know you understand how these essential programs support American leadership abroad. We thank you for your continued leadership, and urge you to make combating TB a top priority for your FY18 appropriations bill.

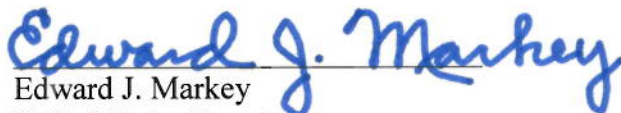
Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



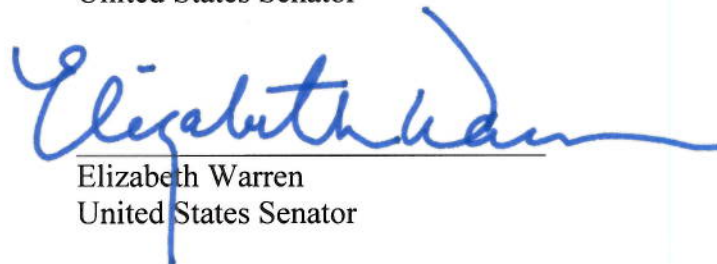
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



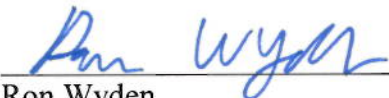
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



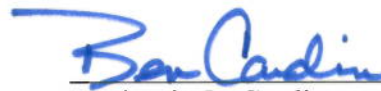
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United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
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Tammy Baldwin
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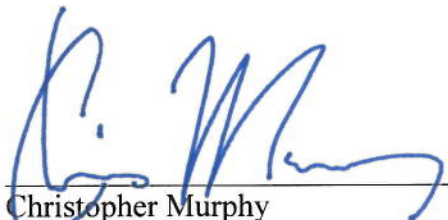
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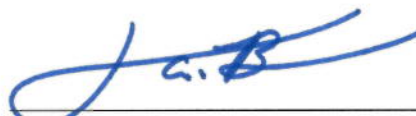
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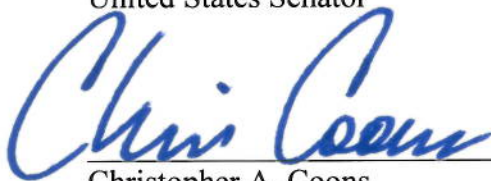
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Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



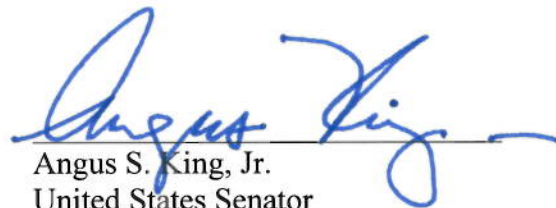
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United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



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United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator