March 16, 2018

The Honorable Hal Rogers  The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Chairman  Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs and Related Programs
HT-2, The Capitol  1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515  Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

Thank you for your leadership and dedication to global health. We write to request that you provide $400 million in funding for bilateral tuberculosis (TB) control in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations bill.

TB is a curable airborne infection that kills more people worldwide than any other infectious disease. In 2016, 10.4 million people became ill with TB, 10 percent of whom were children. In the same year, 1.7 million people died from TB.

Of particular concern are increasingly frequent cases of drug-resistant TB, which is significantly costlier to treat than drug-sensitive TB. Most drug-resistant TB cases are now caused by transmission from person to person, not by inappropriate treatment, making it considerably easier for drug-resistant TB to spread to new geographic areas. New medications for multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB), along with rapid diagnostics, are enabling much faster progress against the disease. But these new technologies are still underutilized.

Failure to invest in TB control also threatens the substantial gains we have made in the fight against HIV/AIDS. TB is the leading killer of people living with HIV/AIDS, and of the 10.4 million people who became ill with tuberculosis in 2016, one-in-ten live with HIV/AIDS.

As the Subcommittee works to maximize the impact of our global health investments, we urge you to consider the devastating effects that an unchecked TB epidemic might have on decades of progress in the global effort to defeat both TB and HIV/AIDS, much of which has been achieved with bipartisan U.S. support.

Funding for USAID’s TB control program will help countries highly-burdened by TB enhance their capacity to prevent, diagnose and treat this curable disease. This funding would also support
the development and implementation of shorter, less toxic treatments, which will facilitate patient adherence to treatment regimens, reduce program costs, and mitigate the growing threat of drug-resistant TB.

We thank you for your consistent support of USAID’s TB control program, and urge you to prioritize TB as you finalize the FY 2019 appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

Gene Green
Member of Congress

Don Young
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

David Scott
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Ted W. Lieu
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Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
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Pramila Jayapal
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John Lewis
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Colleen Hanabusa
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Denny Heck
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Jamie Raskin
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Filemon Vela
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Peter A. DeFazio
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Andre Carson
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Danny K. Davis
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Ben Ray Luján
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Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

David Cicilline
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Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
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Jerry McNerney
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Nidia M. Velázquez
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Lloyd Doggett
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Albio Sires
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William R. Keating
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Rosa L. DeLauro
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Theodore E. Deutch
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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress  

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Member of Congress  

Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress  

Karen Bass  
Member of Congress  

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress