RESULTS Print Media: Global Poverty

January 1 – December 31, 2022
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Article</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/25/22</td>
<td>AK</td>
<td>Young stood tall in the fight against tuberculosis</td>
<td>Anchorage Daily News</td>
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<td>AK</td>
<td>Support the Global Fund</td>
<td>Anchorage Daily News</td>
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<td>2/21/22</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>'Virus update: 12 charts that show how COVID-19 is spreading in Tucson and Arizona’ by Lee Digital Content Center, Arizona Daily Star, January 29, 2022</td>
<td>Arizona Daily Star</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>AZ</td>
<td>No time like the present</td>
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<td>10/23/22</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Keeping global health in mind during election season</td>
<td>Arizona Daily Sun</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>U.S. should fully fund global health group</td>
<td>Mercury News</td>
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<td>3/17/22</td>
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<td>U.S. should fully fund global health group</td>
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<td>11/13/22</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Time to refocus on fight against TB</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Time to refocus on fight against TB</td>
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**Go to Colorado media**

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<tr>
<td>5/7/22</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Mother and daughter crusaders</td>
<td>Stamford Advocate</td>
<td>Op-ed</td>
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<td>5/7/22</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Mother and daughter crusaders</td>
<td>The Hour</td>
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<td>Connecticut Post</td>
<td>Op-ed</td>
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<td>Danbury News Times</td>
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<td>New Haven Register</td>
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<td>5/7/22</td>
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**Go to Connecticut media**

**Go to Delaware media**
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<td>FL</td>
<td>Addressing democracy, climate are New Year’s resolutions</td>
<td>Orlando Sentinel</td>
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<td>3/24/22</td>
<td>FL</td>
<td>COVID isn’t the only killer</td>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
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<td>10/28/22</td>
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<td>Tuberculosis is world’s biggest infectious killer</td>
<td>Miami Herald</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>Support Global Fund to tackle diseases worldwide</td>
<td>Idaho State Journal</td>
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<td>IL</td>
<td>COVID-19 must be reined globally</td>
<td>Times of Northwest Indiana</td>
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<td>Sponsor senate version of S.2965</td>
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<td>2/7/22</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Vaccinate the world</td>
<td>Chicago Sun-Times</td>
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<td>2/11/22</td>
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<td>Senators should increase support for global health efforts</td>
<td>Southern Illinoisan</td>
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<td>1/28/22</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>Support bill funding vaccinations abroad</td>
<td>Herald-Times</td>
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<td>2/28/22</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>Bill seeking to end tuberculosis supported</td>
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<td>3/28/22</td>
<td>IN</td>
<td>US support for global medical efforts urged</td>
<td>Herald-Times</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/4/22</td>
<td>KS</td>
<td>China is winning at COVID vaccine diplomacy. We need Sens. Moran and Marshall's help</td>
<td>Kansas city Star</td>
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### Global food crisis requires U.S. intervention

**8/4/22**  
**MD**  
**Go to Maine media**  
**Baltimore Sun**  
**Letter to the editor**

### We must fight malnutrition

**8/5/22**  
**US**  
**Go to Maryland/Washington, DC media**  
**Washington Post**  
**Letter to the editor**

### We must do more to help vaccinate the world

**1/26/22**  
**MA**  
**Go to Massachusetts media**  
**Berkshire Eagle**  
**Letter to the editor**

### Too soon to relax our defenses against COVID

**3/25/22**  
**MA**  
**Berkshire Eagle**  
**Letter to the editor**

### Feeding the world is within our reach

**5/4/22**  
**MA**  
**Boston Globe**  
**Letter to the editor**

### Hunger is all around us

**7/28/22**  
**MA**  
**Berkshire Eagle**  
**Letter to the editor**

### Lame-duck Congress should pass End TB Now Act

**12/21/22**  
**MA**  
**Berkshire Eagle**  
**Letter to the editor**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/25/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>U.S. must support global COVID response</td>
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<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>2/9/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Billy Long urged to join global initiative</td>
<td>Joplin Globe</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>2/25/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Anti-mandate crowd inconsiderate of unhealthy children</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/22/21</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Congress must support global health initiatives</td>
<td>Joplin Globe</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/23/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>World also needs help with the killer diseases of poverty</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/5/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>US must help fight against global preventable diseases</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/5/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>U.S. needs to show support for Global Fund to help fight disease worldwide</td>
<td>Columbia Missourian</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/6/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Blunt’s leadership needed on COVID</td>
<td>St. Joseph News-Press</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/14/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Fight Tuberculosis</td>
<td>Kansas City Star</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/4/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Advocacy leader's work inspires others to become activists</td>
<td>St. Louis Jewish Light</td>
<td>News article</td>
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<td>5/24/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Legislation might help solve baby formula problem</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>5/25/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>We must act now for undernourished infants</td>
<td>Joplin Globe</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>5/25/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Fight Hunger</td>
<td>Kansas City Star</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>6/6/22</td>
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<td>Malnutrition in children is worsening around the globe</td>
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<td>6/9/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Author/advocate sets inspiring example</td>
<td>St. Louis Jewish Light</td>
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<td>7/22/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Better nutrition helps fight preventable childhood deaths</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>8/14/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Pushing a stroller while advocating for change: St. Louis author says moms can do both</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>News feature</td>
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<td>8/16/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Citizen activism helps to address world hunger problem</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>8/19/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Bettering global education is a worthy goal of activists</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>8/26/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Congress must reauthorize READ Act</td>
<td>Joplin Globe</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>8/26/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Lawmakers should address education around the globe</td>
<td>Columbia Missourian</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>9/12/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Lawmakers should help fight a tuberculosis resurgence</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>12/10/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Before retiring, Blunt should back the child tax credit</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/11/22</td>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Thanks, Sen. Blunt</td>
<td>Kansas City Star</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>3/16/22</td>
<td>NV</td>
<td>Unity can help solve problems</td>
<td>Las Vegas Sun</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>8/7/22</td>
<td>NV</td>
<td>Fight the good fight with Biden</td>
<td>Las Vegas Sun</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/20/22</td>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>Support needed now more than ever for disease and pandemic prep</td>
<td>Lehigh Valley Live</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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### Go to New York media

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<td>2/21/22</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>An ounce of prep</td>
<td>New York Daily News</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/2/22</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Stefanik should support GFATM</td>
<td>Post Star</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>12/8/22</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>End TB Now Act would get fight started again</td>
<td>Staten Island Advance</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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### Go to North Carolina media

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<td>Let's work towards an end to this pandemic</td>
<td>Sanford Herald</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/19/22</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>COVID has taken a toll on global health</td>
<td>Asheville Citizen-Times</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>10/26/22</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Ask Senators to co-sponsor legislation to fight TB</td>
<td>Asheville Citizen-Times</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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### Go to North Dakota media

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<td>Moorhead grad pens book encouraging mothers to become advocates</td>
<td>Inforum</td>
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### Go to Ohio media

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<td>4/20/22</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>Improved US spending on global maternal and child health could help save millions of lives</td>
<td>Cleveland Plain Dealer</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>9/13/22</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>A.J. Wagner belonged to the whole community</td>
<td>Dayton Daily News</td>
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<td>11/11/22</td>
<td>OH</td>
<td>America must lead the world in tuberculosis response</td>
<td>Elyria Chronicle Telegram</td>
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<td>5/26/22</td>
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<td>Weeklies are What’s Happening</td>
<td>Eugene Weekly</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>11/22/22</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Tuberculosis surging after COVID-19</td>
<td>The Oregonian</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>12/31/22</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Perhaps it is time to better ourselves</td>
<td>Albany Democrat-Herald</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/31/22</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Perhaps it is time to better ourselves</td>
<td>Corvallis Gazette-Times</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>PA</td>
<td>U.S. leadership is crucial for the global fund</td>
<td>Philadelphia Inquirer</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>4/9/22</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Commitment to global public health is right move</td>
<td>Tribune-Review</td>
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<td>4/24/22</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Work together to treat killer diseases</td>
<td>Sentinel</td>
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<td>Perfect storm</td>
<td>Philadelphia Inquirer</td>
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<td>8/5/22</td>
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<td>Hungry children are caught in a perfect storm</td>
<td>Intelligencer</td>
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<td>The Times</td>
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<td>1/5/22</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>US must support global vaccine efforts</td>
<td>Knoxville News-Sentinel</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>3/23/22</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Honor late congressman’s fight against infectious diseases</td>
<td>Knoxville News-Sentinel</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>7/22/22</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Need to pass bill to stop Global Malnutrition</td>
<td>Oak Ridger</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>11/20/22</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Legislators should support End TB Now Act</td>
<td>Knoxville News-Sentinel</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>12/4/22</td>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Tennessee's members of Congress should co-sponsor End TB Now Act</td>
<td>Knoxville News-Sentinel</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>1/5/22</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Life-saving discoveries</td>
<td>Houston Chronicle</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>1/30/22</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Support bill to end malnutrition</td>
<td>Dallas Morning News</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<td>3/24/22</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Fight the rise in TB deaths</td>
<td>Dallas Morning News</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/25/22</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Tell Congress to back a U.S. pledge to fully replenish the Global Fund</td>
<td>Austin American-Statesman</td>
<td>Letter to the editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/2/22</td>
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Go to West Virginia media

Go to Wisconsin media
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Alabama media
Alaska media
In the time since Don Young's passing, the numerous tributes, reminiscences and recountings of his career have focused primarily on his personality and style, or on what he accomplished on behalf of the state of Alaska. But there is another part of his legacy, apparently little known or appreciated, that deserves to be known and honored. At the Anchorage memorial service for Young, his daughter was quoted as saying that his family shared him “with people across the world who looked to him for leadership.” Without knowing what particular issues she had in mind, we can testify that Don was indeed a leader on the global stage through his sustained advocacy and work to secure badly needed funding to combat tuberculosis (TB), a disease usually far from the minds of most Americans. Alaska, of course, has its own tragic history with TB, and we still often have the dubious honor of having the highest infection rate among the 50 states.

Don was co-chair of the House TB Elimination Caucus, a position which allowed him to reach out to colleagues with information on the continuing impact of TB in Alaska and around the world. Far from being a disease of the past, TB continues to ravage families and communities in large areas of the world, a situation greatly worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic arrived, TB was the world's leading global cause of death from infectious disease, killing roughly 1.5 million people annually, and the disruptions caused by COVID have reversed years of hard-worn progress against this toll, and further exacerbated the health challenge. Don Young recognized the ongoing need for substantial and growing funding to prevent and treat TB, and especially to meet the threat of evolving drug resistant forms, which are particularly challenging and costly to diagnose, and often incurable, even with expensive treatment, which remains inaccessible to too many. Don deserves major credit for seriously taking on the challenge of securing that funding, boldly calling most recently for a $1 billion annual U.S. investment in its bilateral TB control programs.
We Alaskan RESULTS volunteers, and our fellow advocates around the country and the planet, greatly appreciated Don’s consistent availability to meet with us, and to better inform himself about TB, and effective strategies to defeat it. With our persistent encouragement, Don played a key multi-year role in the Congress in steadily increasing funding to combat TB, by being a repeated lead signer and circulator of an influential annual bipartisan letter to the relevant Appropriations Subcommittee, signed last year by over a hundred of his House colleagues. This year, the recently passed Omnibus Appropriations bill contained few increases for global health accounts, but the largest one, more than half of the total increase, was for U.S. bilateral TB control programs. The many hundreds of millions of dollars that Congressman Young's leadership helped secure over time have saved countless lives. Don’s important contributions to the cause of global health should be recognized and suitably honored. His informed voice and effective behind-the-scenes leadership are already greatly missed.

_Sara Buckingham, Tiffany Chiem, Michele Friedman, Roger Hudson, John Kennish, Pat Kennish, Sue Liebner, Mary Martin, Mya Ramirez, and Catherine Schoessler_ are Alaska RESULTS volunteers. RESULTS is a nationwide advocacy group and lobbying organization whose stated mission is to identify the highest-impact policy solutions to poverty and cultivate an advocacy movement that secures the political leadership, focus and resources to get the job done.

Support the Global Fund

June 13, 2022

In a world fully encompassed with COVID, masks, social distancing, it can sometimes be hard to remember the other diseases that take the lives of too many people around the world like AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The fight to address COVID-19 pandemic has been significant and still relevant but should not be at the expense of delaying life-saving measures for other devastating diseases and the way to do just that is by supporting the Global Fund.

So what exactly is the Global Fund?

The Global Fund is an international partnership with the mission to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics. Their funding supports programs run by local experts in more than 100 countries. What’s more is that for the past two decades, the Global Fund has always had bipartisan support in Congress and has saved more than 40 million lives. This translates to reduced death rates from these diseases by 46% and has undoubtedly strengthened families, communities and health systems around the world. The pandemic has shifted the priorities of already stretched resources but with at least $18 billion over the next three years can ensure that our global neighbors not only survive but thrive now and during future health crises.

I urge Sens. Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan to deliver on the $2 billion President Joe Biden included in his fiscal year 2023 budget request. We have the opportunity to not only be the leaders the world is looking for, but to also signal to other nations that this is still a worthwhile investment to ensure a healthy and equitable future for all.

– Mariah Seater, MPH, Anchorage

https://www.adn.com/opinions/letters/2022/06/13/letter-support-the-global-fund/
Arizona media
Dear Editor,

Thanks for the virus update, even more important to me with my granddaughter attending the University in Tucson. Sadly, these cycles of variant surges are likely to continue since low and middle income countries don't have enough vaccine to make a difference. Fortunately, this is beginning to change, unfortunately at too slow of a pace to stop these variants from developing. Time to call the president and our members of Congress and ask them to step up the efforts to beat this pandemic globally, to help stop these variant cycles of new infections and deaths locally.

– Willie Dickerson, Downtown

No time like the present

March 25, 2022

Re: the March 14 letter "Time to ditch fossil fuels."

Thanks to the letter writer for reminding us of this critical time to take action to battle climate change. Indeed, this is a perfect time, with the world coming together to battle Ukraine's invaders, Congress working together to pass a bipartisan budget, and the pandemic shining a light on the equity crisis we face. In addition to bringing the free world together to support Ukraine, the president also announced hosting this year's funding conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and malaria. The Global Fund works with middle- and low-income countries to strengthen health care systems, save lives and battle pandemics, including COVID. Last year's increase to the child tax credit showed we can cut domestic poverty if we take action. So speak up to those who represent you and let's move Congress to battle all of these current challenges, the time is now for this combined "moonshot."

– Willie Dickerson, Northwest side

Keeping global health in mind during election season

October 23, 2022

This election season, Arizonans must make sure that our politicians don't forget about the importance of global health efforts, especially as we are only now beginning to slowly recover from the effects of COVID-19. After COVID-19 demanded much of the world's attention, we are now witnessing the effects that this has had on other global diseases, such as Tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis is the second-leading infections disease killer in the world after COVID-19, but TB is preventable. The End TB Now Act will make USAID’s global TB programs more effective and strengthen U.S. bilateral coordination with global organizations, including the Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. It also increases research and development, as well as monitoring and evaluation efforts. In order to prevent millions more from dying preventable deaths as a result of TB, members of Congress must act now.

I applaud Rep. Tom O’Halleran’s co-sponsorship of the End TB Now Act, and I urge Arizona’s other members of Congress to do the same. We must show that Arizona has not forgotten about the importance of global health programs in keeping people abroad and at home safe from preventable disease.

– Rayna Castillo, Flagstaff

Arkansas media
California media
March 17, 2022

The global pandemic not only cost millions of lives, but it has also caused deadly setbacks in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It is imperative we continue fighting COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics by supporting The Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

The Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 64%, and strengthened health systems around the world. To recover from these setbacks, the United States must take the lead to replenish the Global Fund with $18 billion over the next three years.

Thanks to Rep. Eric Swalwell for joining other Democrats and Republicans with his support of The Global Fund. I urge President Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his FY23 budget request and Congress to appropriate for FY23. It will send a signal to other nations to fully fund at the replenishment conference in September.

– Pat Payne, Castro Valley

https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/03/16/letters-755/

Reprinted in:

EAST BAY TIMES

https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2022/03/16/letters-755/
Time to refocus on fight against TB

November 13, 2022

Since COVID-19 cases are subsiding in the world, it’s time to shift attention back to the previous global pandemic: tuberculosis. Prior to COVID’s arrival, TB rates had been dropping, but in 2021 the death toll rose to 1.6 million people.

TB isn’t as contagious as COVID, but its drain on the global economy is significant. In 2017, the Lancet estimated the disease’s global cost between 2015 and 2030 would be almost $1 trillion. Given inflation and backsliding on non-COVID disease control since 2020, it’s fair to say the estimate is higher now.

I want to thank Reps. Mike Thompson and Mark DeSaulnier for co-sponsoring the End TB Now Act (H.R. 8654) and urge Rep. Jerry McNERney to do the same before he retires in January. I also urge Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla to co-sponsor theenate version of the bill (S. 3386).

– Jim Driggers, Concord


Reprinted in:

EAST BAY TIMES
Colorado media
Connecticut media
Mother and daughter crusaders

By John Breunig

May 7, 2022

This didn’t start out as a Mother's Day column. But when you're talking to a psychotherapist, it's probably an inevitable turn in the conversation. The twist here is that it was her mom we talked about.

I was interviewing psychotherapist Sandra Eagle to hear about her recent work with RESULTS, an agency that unites volunteers to try to stem poverty around the globe. Eagle and her fellow members of the Coastal Connecticut Chapter pay their own way to the annual international conference in Washington, D.C., where they lobby members of Congress.

This journey to D.C. was different. RESULTS funded Eagle's trip so she could try to sway U.S. Sen. Chris Murphy and U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut. It's not as though any of Connecticut's Congressional delegation need convincing about the goal of replenishing The Global Fund to fight HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis. President Joe Biden has already pledged $6 billion, along with a $1 match for every $2 from other donor nations. All in the hope of hitting a minimum of $18 billion.

Murphy and DeLauro have key roles on the Senate and House Appropriations committees. Eagle is a domino, nudging them to get others in line so Biden can focus on his peers in other countries rather than on members of Congress. Eagle wasn’t asked to contact U.S. Rep. Jim Himes, but she says he promised to deliver a House floor speech in support of the Global Fund.

RESULTS gave similar assignments to some 30 advocates, a sort of Impossible Mission Force dedicated to ending poverty. Most had tasks like Eagle’s, to try to push legislators forward as the Global Fund was knocked backward by COVID, just
like everything (and everyone) else. About seven advocates had tougher missions. They had to pitch lawmakers who need convincing.

“This is the time,” Eagle repeats.

The pitch is simple: The investment saves lives as well as money. It protects traveling Americans, including members of the military.

Eagle, who lives in Stamford, speaks rapidly because she knows I’m familiar with the impact of the fund in saving a reported 44 million lives over the past two decades. She has her own version of “yada, yada, yada,” when words don’t need to be said, abbreviating the abbreviation to “da, da, da.”

As we talk about the big picture, I’m distracted by a smaller one behind Eagle. The collage depicts a woman rising like a tree and branching out. It’s a fitting backdrop as I inquire about her own roots as an activist.

Eagle’s smile promises a good story to come.

“I was born on the set of ‘West Side Story,’” she begins. “My mom is Puerto Rican and they didn’t want her marrying the Italian. My father is Italian and they didn’t want him marrying a Puerto Rican. So my parents eloped.”

Her parents separated in 1957, when she was 4, over a showdown mirrored in countless American households of the era. Mom wanted to work. Dad said no.

So Iris Iaccarino took her two daughters to Puerto Rico. Six months later, Eagle’s father brought the girls back to Brooklyn, N.Y.

“It was the initial trauma in my life to be without my mother at 4 years old,” the psychotherapist shares.

It may have taken a few rounds, but Mom won the fight.

“And what did my mother go to work as ...?”

It’s a provocative pause. My faith in a worthy answer is rewarded. “A business rep for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.”
Iris only had a 10th-grade education and lacked confidence in her own written English. So she recruited 10-year-old Sandra to write reports about people in sweat shops who needed eye surgery, or moms desperate for time off to care for ailing children.

“My mother was fighting for these people's rights,” Eagle recalls.

Back then, it wasn't political. Her mom was freestyling.

“There was nothing in our household that said 'This is the left, this is the right. This is Republican, this is Democrat.' What she was trying to say is that this was the human thing to do.”

Decades on, Eagle recognizes that her mother was a radical, in the way Mister Rogers was a radical.

In 1975, she was presented with the Borinquen Woman of The Year Award in honor of her work on behalf of Latina women and their families. A 1977 New York Times article documented Iaccarino as one of the first women appointed to a leadership position with the union.

Iaccarino died in Stamford last September at age 93.

“You have to have a heart for the working people,” she is quoted as saying in the Times. “You must be a real dedicated person, not think about time or money.”

Within the four walls of her Greenwich office, Eagle discovered the rewards of experiencing miracles with patients. But a self-awareness that she was primarily helping educated and affluent clients left her with a sense of personal irrelevance, a feeling “that my whole world was burning.”

That eventually inspired her to help start the RESULTS chapter in 2010, which led to that call to persuade members of Congress to reassure the president of the United States so he could prioritize rallying support from other nations. All for the benefit of strangers.
Eagle grew up “in the Kennedy years when the future belonged to us.” Her own sons became disenchanted. “Mom, what's the use? Nothing ever changes,” she was told.

The events of Jan. 20, 2021 delivered an unexpected epiphany.

“I turn on the TV and it's a woman senator ... reaching over to the woman vice president of the United States, to introduce her to the woman Supreme Court Justice,” Eagle says. She can't quell her emotions or language as she relives the moment. “F--- yes, things have changed.”

“It validated my life. It validated my mother’s life.”

The tears cease. And Eagle laughs. She sounds like she's just had a conversation with her 4-year-old self, the girl who was “without my mom for a while.” The girl who couldn't know her mom was always with her. She always will be.

*John Breunig is editorial page editor of the Stamford Advocate and Greenwich Time. jbreunig@scni.com; twitter.com/johnbreunig.*


**Reprinted in:**

**THE HOUR**

**ctpost**
Delaware media
Florida media
Twenty-eight years ago I wrote a book titled “Reclaiming Our Democracy.” Maybe that is why it was so hard to read that 52% of young Americans between 18 and 29 years old believe that our democracy is either “in trouble” or “failing,” according to the latest Harvard Youth Poll released in December.

But the young are not alone in feeling despair over the state of our democracy. According to a PBS Newshour/NPR/Marist poll taken before July 4, “67% of all Americans, including majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents, believe American democracy is ‘under threat.’”

Hardly good news for action on the climate emergency.

Harvard Institute of Politics Director Mark Gearan tried to soften the blow when he said, “In the 2020 election young Americans proved with their record-shattering turnout that they are a formidable voting bloc and eager to make their voices heard.”

That was encouraging, but not the whole story. The youth turnout was unprecedented, jumping from 39% in 2016 to 50% in 2020, according to Tufts University’s Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement. While that was an impressive increase in youth voting, 50% of youth still stayed home on election day as did 28.5% of those 35 years old and older, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Many of those who got to the polls might have thought that their work was done. But voting is not enough to renew our democracy or address climate change. We must find deeper ways to make our voices heard on issues we care about.
For example, the Harvard Youth Poll found that, “56 percent of young Americans expect climate change to impact their future decisions — and nearly half (45%) already see its local effects.”

In the lead-up to COP26 in Glasgow, climate activist and Drawdown editor Paul Hawken said, “It’s estimated that between 98 and 99% of humanity is disengaged. Your friends might be engaged,” Hawken continued, “but between 98 and 99% of humanity is disengaged. From the Earth’s point of view, there’s no difference between a climate denier and somebody who understands the problem but actually doesn’t do anything.”

Now there’s a wake-up call. So how do we combat the powerlessness and cynicism that tempts us to throw in the towel?

Johns Hopkins University Professor Hahrie Han provides a good place to start with her distinction between transactional advocacy (sign the petition, transaction complete) and transformational advocacy where volunteers — that’s us — are trained and encouraged to succeed at deep, sustained, relational advocacy.

That means meeting with members of Congress, pitching editorials, writing op-eds and letters to the editor, speaking and bringing new people in and, as a result, seeing ourselves as community leaders.

But you can’t engage in transformational advocacy by yourself. You need an organization to help you. Most nonprofits, however, are stuck in a 501c3, tax-deductible ditch that keeps them from encouraging their members in stronger forms of advocacy.

It’s our job to find an organization that’s committed to helping us climb out of that ditch. Groups like Citizens’ Climate Lobby, Foundation for Climate Restoration, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Catholic Relief Services, the anti-poverty lobby RESULTS, and American Promise fulfill that need.

In a climate change conversation with John Kerry at Yale in 2017, former Vice-President Al Gore told the audience, “I want to recruit you … we can do this. People doubt we have the political will. Just remember that political will is itself a renewable resource. Go out and renew it.”
I know, that conversation was four years ago and not much seems to have changed. But that's all the more reason to finally answer the wake-up call and renew political will for addressing the climate.

Make it your New Year’s resolution to build the political will to address climate change. Do it for yourself, for your children and grandchildren, and for our democracy.

*Sam Daley-Harris* is the founder of the anti-poverty lobby *RESULTS* and of Civic Courage.

“The Invading Sea” is the opinion arm of the Florida Climate Reporting Network, a collaborative of news organizations across the state focusing on the threats posed by the warming climate.

COVID isn’t the only killer

World TB Day

March 24, 2022

The pandemic has now killed at least six million people around the world, but another potential killer with respiratory impact is tuberculosis. TB, too, can be prevented and treated. Unfortunately, the pandemic interrupted and prevented treatment for millions. We must get back on track to fight this disease, with a strong U.S. pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria at the fund’s replenishment conference later this year. Today, March 24, is World TB Day. I urge President Joe Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his fiscal 2023 budget request and that Congress appropriate the same amount.

– Linda Schatz, Tampa

https://www.tampabay.com/opinion/2022/03/24/dont-toke-and-drive-letters/
Tuberculosis is world's biggest infectious killer

October 28, 2022

Tuberculosis (TB) is often thought of as a disease of the past. Unfortunately, it remains a major global health threat and is a key driver of poverty. In 2020, more than 10 million people fell ill with TB and 1.5 million people lost their lives to the disease globally. While the global impact of TB is devastating, there is a solution in saving lives through support the End TB Now Act.

TB has no country boundaries and is also found in the United States. We must not forget that TB is an airborne disease transmitted by even a common sneeze. In 2021, 500 tuberculosis cases were reported in Florida. This represents a 21% increase in cases from 2020.

The lack of investment and added stress on health systems means the global End TB Strategy and United Nations High Level Meeting targets for TB are now all off track. The Stop TB Partnership estimates that delaying or failing to implement the goals will mean an additional 43 million people will develop TB, leading to 6.6 million additional deaths by 2030.

Fighting TB in the hardest-hit countries and communities is not only an issue of health equity, it also makes economic sense by supporting country health systems to conquer this treatable disease.

To course-correct and save more lives, Congress must now act. The End NOW TB Act is a bicameral, bipartisan legislation which directs the U.S. Agency for International Development to set bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of TB. American leadership can help change that.

We thank Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar for her leadership in co-sponsoring this bill and ask every member of Congress to co-sponsor the End TB Now Act.

– Dr. Yanick Perodin, Betsy Suero Skipp, Miami

No online link
Hawaiʻi media
Idaho media
Guest Opinion: Support Global Fund to tackle diseases worldwide

July 17, 2022

At the height of the AIDS crisis, the world came together to fight back, pooling its resources to create the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This partnership has helped save 44 million lives and has become the most powerful tool for funding community-led responses to health.

However, COVID-19 sent progress against AIDS, TB and malaria tumbling backwards for the first time in decades. As just one example, more than a million more people missed out on lifesaving treatment for tuberculosis last year. The Global Fund now has a new plan to support countries to save 20 million lives, claw back progress against the diseases, and build health systems to help stop the pandemics of the future. This fall, the U.S. will host a pledging conference, rallying global donors to invest the full $18 billion needed to put the new plan into action. And President Biden has said he intends to pledge $6 billion from the U.S. over the next three years, matching $1 for every $2 from other countries.

Bipartisan leadership in Congress is now needed to deliver that funding, push the White House to show more global leadership, and encourage other global donors to come forward.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that cooperation amongst U.S. citizens and the citizens of the world is not just helpful but genuinely essential for a timely and comprehensive response to fighting these and future diseases, and protecting our human brothers and sisters from what are largely preventable and/or curable diseases. It is in the U.S.’s best interest to help prevent future pandemics, and the best way to do that is creating global health systems to respond to the current pandemic as well as the TB, Malaria, and AIDS crises in other countries. This was
emphasized when the same systems the global fund helped create in impoverished countries to fight the TB crisis, were instrumental in their ability to then pivot and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The global fund prides itself on its long standing history of transparency. It provides a full annual report on spending and allocation of funds. If there is ever any misuse or improper handling of funds it is not only reported, but the solutions to the issues are also included in the report and followed up on. Thus ensuring continued accountability amongst all involved, including donors and recipients of the funds provided.

The U.S. has been a longstanding leader in Global Fund replenishment efforts. With the money raised, the global fund has plans to save 20 million lives and reduce the mortality rate by 64% across the three diseases by 2026. This will avert more than 450 million infections or cases of HIV, TB, Malaria and reinforce health systems for pandemic preparedness. The global fund focuses on investing in health workers, laboratories, supply chains, and centering community led systems, with every $1 invested in fighting the three diseases resulting in $31 in health gains and economic returns.

Currently members of Congress are submitting annual appropriations requests to the relevant appropriations subcommittees. Our very own senator Risch is a ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a key figure in the decision making for appropriations going towards the global fund. Reach out to his offices to show your support for the global fund and ensure he sees that Idaho understands the importance and the increasing need for funding to be allocated as the global fund has requested.

– Siobhan Curtis is an Idaho resident and a Registered Nurse. She volunteers with an antipoverty advocacy organization called RESULTS.

https://www.idahopress.com/opinion/guest_opinions/guest-opinion-support-global-fund-to-tackle-diseases-worldwide/article_fd54fae0-95cf-50c8-aca9-adacd52d4825.html

Reprinted in:
Illinois media
COVID-19 must be reined globally

February 6, 2022

Senator Manchin may have declared the Build Back Better bill dead (Nation/World, Feb. 2), but Congress should at least agree with a small part of that bill: a $1.3 billion provision to bolster global vaccination efforts against COVID-19.

It works on multiple levels. Congress has a history of bipartisan support for global health investment, including during the Trump administration. More important, COVID-19 must be reined globally or it always remains a threat to us. Countries with low vaccination rates may not always be the source of new variants, but they are likely places where those variants may become pandemic and hence globally so.

We saw this with the omicron variant in Africa, from last summer through today. Travel bans cannot hold such threats at bay for the long haul. Vaccinations can. Striking a blow against COVID-19 is an opportunity that can and should pass muster with the administration and Congress.

Oscar Lanzi, Chicago

https://www.nwitimes.com/opinion/letters/letters-to-the-editor-covid-19-must-be-reined-globally/article_3c131bf1-a703-54f6-95c2-ec44e54db646.html
Sponsor senate version of S.2965

January 28, 2022

To the Editor:

Regarding: “Illinois schools face worsening educator shortage” from Jan. 18.

I agree that lawmakers can take various steps now to fix the educator shortages. The ripple effects and collateral damage from COVID are seen in every aspect of our life, some are fixable and some others are not.

Another fixable crisis is malnutrition. Thanks to Reps. Mike Bost and Rodney Davis for co-sponsoring the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act (S.2956/H.R.4693) which authorizes USAID to scale up its coordination and efforts to address global malnutrition. While malnutrition is almost entirely preventable, statistics show that each year, there are 2.6 million childhood deaths worldwide and approximately 150 million children with stunted development because they do not have adequate nutrition. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has made it worse — UNICEF estimates that 22 percent of the world’s children under 5 are stunted due to malnutrition. I urge Illinois Sens. Tammy Duckworth and Dick Durbin to cosponsor the Senate version of the bill, S.2965.

– Raj Jaladi, St. Louis, Missouri

https://thesouthern.com/opinion/letters/voice-of-the-reader-get-youth-back-into-real-life/article_b365a4e3-ca28-5b36-88be-d6c9abd41de3.html?fbclid=IwAR0dwmne_oSyhekAuK_QL-R0meImILmKDXGrRlugbbOKnXU5EaDm9OdUYhQ
I’m glad to hear that Chicago school and teachers’ unions are standing firm to keep school masking policies in place. Masks and vaccines are effective methods to help us through COVID-19 variant surges. But we must not forget that variants will keep setting us back until every country in the world has access to vaccines and other tools. We cannot continue to neglect low- and middle-income countries.

Congress must provide $17 billion in supplemental funding for the global COVID-19 response in the FY22 spending bills. I urge Sens. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, as well as Reps. Jan Schakowsky, Bobby Rush, Robin Kelly, and Mike Quigley, to support this increase. The United States must continue to marshal the political will to vaccinate the world, save lives now, and ensure we are stronger after the pandemic.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, St. Louis, Missouri

Senators should increase support for global health efforts

February 11, 2022

I agree with Raj Jaladi’s letter “Malnutrition Bill Needs Senate Supporters,” printed Jan. 28, 2022. He thanked Reps. Mike Bost and Rodney Davis for authorizing a USAID scale up of efforts addressing global malnutrition. Both congressmen have shown past concern for global immunization programs and HIV/AIDS funding. They can continue their support for global health by signing onto a letter urging President Biden to make an increased pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria at its 2022 Replenishment this fall.

The Global Fund played a critical role in providing emergency funding, knowledge, and resources when a pandemic swept our planet. Still, COVID-19 seriously disrupted healthcare. We are backsliding in the fight against AIDS, TB, and malaria.

The Global Fund has enjoyed strong bipartisan support in Congress for two decades. It is Congress’ responsibility to make sure the President doesn't break tradition in a time of weakened health security. I urge Reps. Bost and Davis to join my representative, Rep. Ann Wagner, in signing this urgent letter.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country, Missouri

https://thesouthern.com/opinion/letters/voice-of-the-reader-senators-should-increase-support-for-global-health-efforts/article_20b86068-98f9-5d41-bdcc-2e657e8bda7e.html
Indiana media
Support bill funding vaccinations abroad

January 28, 2022

On Jan. 13 the Herald-Times reported that Monroe County had moved into Indiana's red advisory level, the most serious level on the state's COVID-19 dashboard.

The surge from the omicron variant, which arose in Africa, has demonstrated yet again that America cannot protect itself from the pandemic while low- and middle-income countries remain unprotected. The United Nations, with United States leadership, has set a goal of vaccinating 70% of the world's population by September 2022. It is estimated that this will cost $63 billion and that low- and middle-income countries can pay $20 billion of it.

The United States' proportionate share of the remainder is $17 billion. President Joe Biden should request that Congress include $17 billion for that purpose in its 2022 spending bill. U.S. Sens. Todd Young and Mike Braun and U.S. Rep. Trey Hollingsworth should do everything in their power to support that investment.

– Gene Arnholt, Bloomington

https://www.heraldtimesonline.com/story/opinion/letters/2022/01/28/letter-support-bill-funding-vaccinations-abroad/6589134001/
Bill seeking to end tuberculosis supported

February 28, 2022

In this era of troubling political division, it's heartening to see instances where Republicans and Democrats collaborate for the common good. One such instance is The End Tuberculosis Act, introduced by our own U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind., a longtime leader on global TB programs, and Sen. Bob Menendez, R-N.J.

"Tuberculosis is a preventable, treatable, and curable disease," Young said in introducing the bill. "More than 25 years after it was declared a public health emergency, TB remains the second most deadly infectious health threat next to COVID-19."

The WHO estimates there were 1.9 million TB deaths in 2020, many of them parents with young children. This number had been dropping in recent years due in part to American support of programs to diagnose and treat TB, but the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated health systems worldwide and halted that progress. The End TB Now Act will get us back on track by putting a comprehensive approach to TB prevention, diagnosis, and treatment at the forefront of our global health priorities.

I urge other senators, including our own Mike Braun, to co-sponsor this bill, S. 3386, and give it the momentum it needs to become law.

– Stephen Arnold, Bloomington

https://www.heraldtimesonline.com/story/opinion/letters/2022/02/28/letter-bill-seeking-end-tuberculosis-supported/6818404001/
US support for global medical efforts urged

March 28, 2022

Later this year, the U.S. will host a pledging conference for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Global Fund has saved 44 million lives over the last 20 years. The pandemic has caused major setbacks, so this year's replenishment is especially important.

The Global Fund needs at least $18 billion over the next three years. The U.S. normally provides a third of the funding, which would be $6 billion. Other countries follow our lead. I urge President Biden to include $2 billion for the first year in his Fiscal Year 2023 budget request.

I urge Sens. Todd Young and Mike Braun and Rep. Trey Hollingsworth to do everything they can to make sure Congress appropriates that amount.

– Gene Arnholt, Bloomington

https://www.heraldtimesonline.com/story/opinion/letters/2022/03/28/letter-us-support-global-medical-efforts-urged/7048995001/
Iowa media
Kansas media
China is winning at COVID vaccine diplomacy. We need Sens. Moran and Marshall’s help

By Pranav Savanur, Special to the Star

April 4, 2022

On March 15, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions advanced the PREVENT Pandemics Act with strong bipartisan support, including from Kansas Sens. Jerry Moran and Roger Marshall. Despite the bill having important provisions for public health response and preparedness, it lacks one key factor: preventing the emergence of new COVID-19 variants to end the current pandemic. Bipartisan conversations around a new COVID-19 budget supplemental have begun. Still, they lack Republican support for global pandemic relief. Sens. Moran and Marshall’s failure to intervene and support new funding to vaccinate the world is not only utterly morally unacceptable and enormously ineffective, but it will also continue the COVID-19 crisis.

The at least $5 billion requested by the White House for global COVID-19 relief makes sure that the funds are used for purchasing vaccines and administering them. As long as there are billions of unvaccinated people in underserved countries, the United States will be vulnerable to wave after wave of new infections. Some will be more deadly, and some will be more infectious. Some will be both. Until everyone in the world who wants a vaccine can get it, we are all at risk, and that’s especially true of our most vulnerable: the elderly, cancer survivors, the immunocompromised and the uninsured.

We are gambling with COVID-19, and we are not winning. New variants have already put China under new lockdowns. The coronavirus is surging worldwide again, and the BA.2 omicron variant is now the most dominant strain in the United States. More variants will come, and no other solution gets America back to normal faster than vaccinating the world.
The U.S. has thus far pledged to donate 1.2 billion doses, but only 511 million have been donated or are in transit. China has delivered nearly 5 out of the 11 billion and is influencing African political and economic drivers with vaccine diplomacy as the world’s largest exporter of COVID-19 vaccines. China has declared a policy to provide an additional 2 billion doses and another 1 billion doses to Africa in the next two years. In total, 1.76 billion doses have been sold with a strings-attached deal, 222 million donated, and a total of 1.41 billion delivered. The strings-attached contract could stipulate that countries receiving the vaccines must join China’s “Belt and Road” infrastructure development initiative, which further hinders America’s influence on the African continent. The Japan Times and Chinese state media also report the same.

But the vaccines China is using to gain more leverage globally are substantially less effective against the latest variants. Getting vaccines to everyone who wants them will get us to global herd immunity, significantly reducing the chances of emerging variants. The U.S.-backed, Food and Drug Administration-approved vaccines are proven to be more effective against omicron than the Sinovac and other vaccines made with inactivated virus. On the other hand, as noted by a bipartisan group led by Sens. Tina Smith and Lisa Murkowski, Russia has signed agreements to send more than 700 million shots to more than 50 countries in Latin America and Asia — but Russia is in no position to fill those needs. FDA-approved mRNA vaccines are not only the most potent weapons to combat emerging COVID-19 variants — they are also our only shot out of this pandemic while delivering no-strings-attached humanitarian assistance to allies across the world by stopping the variants.

Sens. Moran and Marshall should use their powerful positions to pledge at least $5 billion the White House has requested to vaccinate the world. Debates on the Republican side of Congress’ failure to pass a COVID-19 budget supplemental focused on unspent funds from previous rounds of pandemic relief. That understandable concern was entirely misplaced about the $5 billion portions of the funds intended for global vaccinations. According to business and military experts from the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, fewer than 0.34% of all previous COVID-19 packages have been directed toward international relief. Politicized debates regarding offsets and repurposing unspent money from previous relief overlook emergency supplemental funds, which are, by definition, without offsets. Passing
an emergency budget supplemental to vaccinate the world will not hinder that
debate about repurposing unspent money. Simply put: There are no unspent funds
on the global side of the COVID-19 ledger.

Without global herd immunity, policymakers must anticipate new rounds of mask
mandates, school closures and social distancing measures. Sens. Moran and
Marshall should intervene to depoliticize the emergency COVID-19 supplemental
debate and move towards an emergency supplemental — especially for global
access to vaccines. We need our senators to break the deadlock and include at least
$5 billion in funding for global vaccines that ensure we end COVID-19 variants and
safely move away from lockdowns and mandates. They should join the bipartisan
negotiating group and fight for a quick resolution that exempts global vaccines
from offsets and gets this bill across the finish line before Easter.

**Pranav Savanur of Manhattan, Kansas, is policy co-chair, organizer and Kansas state
team captain for the 501(c)(4) nonprofit Right to Health Action. He is a master of public
health candidate at Yale School of Public Health.**

[https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/readers-opinion/guest-commentary/article260035470.html](https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/readers-opinion/guest-commentary/article260035470.html)
Kentucky media
Louisiana media
Maine media
Maryland/
Washington, DC
media
Global food crisis requires U.S. intervention

August 4, 2022

A recent article, “How did Russia-Ukraine war trigger a food crisis?” (June 18), highlighted how the Russian war in Ukraine is exacerbating food shortages around the world. In low-income countries that rely on wheat, corn and sunflower oil imports, this scarcity, along with rising inflation rates, has become a severe humanitarian crisis.

Addressing the current food emergency is critical, but we also need to tackle the broader issue of global malnutrition, which is the underlying cause of nearly half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5. The U.S. needs to take action to support suffering families around the world. Recently, the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (H.R.4693) was passed out of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations committee. The bipartisan bill directs the U.S. to focus on evidence-based, high-impact interventions, like ready-to-use therapeutic foods, breastfeeding support, prenatal vitamins and vitamin A supplements. It would make our foreign aid more effective and impactful on marginalized communities.

I want to thank U.S. Sens. Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen, both of whom are co-sponsors of this critical bill. Now, I urge them to encourage Senate leadership to bring this bill to the floor for a vote. Their support could save millions of children from starvation.

– Katie Fleischer, Washington, D.C.

We must fight malnutrition

August 5, 2022

The Aug. 2 Health article “Rising temps could mean rising malnutrition in poorer countries, study on West Africa says” connected climate change with severe malnutrition and stunted growth. It discussed one of the many studies that reveal the importance of addressing the current food scarcity emergency, while simultaneously addressing long-term challenges such as conflict, climate change and covid-19 to prepare our global food system for long-term stability. Global malnutrition is not just an acute issue; it's an ongoing tragedy that causes the deaths of about 3 million children under age 5 every year. Fortunately, scientific evidence has shown that a few specific interventions, the “Power 4,” can prevent the deaths of malnourished children.

The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act directs the U.S. Agency for International Development to focus on those high-impact strategies: prenatal vitamins, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplements and ready-to-use therapeutic food. Recently, the bill was passed out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with no opposition. Now, a final vote in the Senate is the last barrier to making our nutrition foreign aid more effective. It's time for the United States to step up as a global leader and support suffering families around the world. We need champions in the Senate to urge leadership to bring this critical bill to the floor for a vote.

– Katie Fleischer, Washington

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/08/05/we-must-fight-malnutrition/
Massachusetts media
We must do more to help vaccinate the world

January 26, 2022

To the editor: I am grateful to be fully vaccinated, having had three doses of the Pfizer vaccine.

But I am sad and angry that we will not easily end the COVID-19 pandemic due to the misguided national self-interest and vaccine hoarding of high-income nations. By failing to vaccinate the world when we had the opportunity, we have enabled the virus to mutate, causing not only omicron, which is leading us rapidly toward 1 million American deaths, but potentially creating more virulent variants.

Viruses know no borders. Until we are all safe, which now means at a minimum all vaccinated, none of us are safe. It is truly remarkable that science enabled vaccine creation and production within nine months. However, by creating artificial scarcity of manufacturing and thus not getting vaccines to lower and middle income countries, we have allowed this pandemic to continue indefinitely. Previous estimates by Public Citizen showed that we could have vaccinated the world with 11 billion vaccines at a cost of $25 billion. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. “The emergence of the immune-evasive omicron variant means that 22 billion more mRNA vaccine doses are now needed to bring the pandemic under control,” according to a PrEP4All report released earlier this month that was written with scientists at Harvard, the Columbia University Schools of Public Health and medicine, the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization in Canada and New York University.

The United States has the ability to lead the world in producing vaccines and sharing vaccine technology to enable local manufacturing which will better situate us to contain the next inevitable pandemic. And better yet, we can lead in the creation of a multilateral fund, along the lines of The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, which could holistically prevent the next pandemic by preventing zoonotic spillover.
Right now, there are multiple groups — including CARE, RESULTS, Borgen Project, Right to Health Action, Global Citizen, Partners in Health — advocating together to push the Biden administration and Congress to include at least $17 billion for vaccines in the upcoming February appropriations. For perspective, Congress approved $778 billion for military spending in December. Please join me and add your voice to ensure that we provide adequate funding to stop COVID now. This is an issue of global health, global security and global humanitarianism. And it is the right and necessary thing to do.

– Leslye Heilig, Great Barrington

Too soon to relax our defenses against COVID

March 25, 2022

Renée Graham’s column “No, COVID isn’t over” is spot-on (Ideas, March 20). The recent failure of Congress to allocate funding for COVID-19 in the omnibus bill means that the United States will soon face limits for coverage of vaccines, drugs, and testing. Meanwhile, in low-income countries, only about 15 percent of people have even received a single vaccine dose, let alone had ready access to testing and therapeutics.

With Omicron BA.2 rapidly spreading around the world, we could soon feel its impact here. The longer we delay vaccinating the world, the faster new variants will develop. This pandemic, killing more than 1,000 people a day in the United States, is far from over. Soon there will be more than 1 million deaths in this country, while more than 6 million have died worldwide (and according to an article in Nature, the actual number could be twice that).

Congress needs to allocate a minimum of $5 billion for an emergency global COVID response immediately. Although this is a grossly inadequate amount, we must do whatever we can to get vaccines into arms everywhere. Failure to do so means that COVID will continue to traverse the world, mutating along the way, and never ending. COVID will remain a pandemic despite our incredible scientific advances.

– Dr. Leslye Heilig, Great Barrington

The writer is a member of the policy team of Right to Health Action, a nationwide grass-roots movement to stop COVID-19 and prevent future pandemics.

https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/03/25/opinion/too-soon-relax-our-defenses-against-covid/
To the editor: The world is facing an extreme nutrition crisis compounded by the war in Ukraine on top of the pandemic.

According to Bread.org, in 2022, “nearly 14 million more children are likely to be severely malnourished because of the pandemic’s impacts. This means that 58.9 million young children — or almost the whole population of South Africa — will likely face life-threatening malnutrition if the global community doesn’t act.” Each year, half of all preventable deaths in children under 5 are attributed to malnutrition. To put this in perspective, 3.1 million children die from hunger related causes annually.

There are more than 800 million people in the world suffering from food insecurity. And the situation has worsened dramatically due to the crisis in Ukraine. Both Ukraine and Russia are the bread basket of the world, as well as the source for 80 percent of the potash used in fertilizer. The prices of wheat, corn and sunflower oil have increased exorbitantly. And as much as we see this impacting our grocery bills, the effect is that much more dramatic in low- and middle-income countries.

The U.S. has long supported broad nutritional access globally, yet more must be done. Congress is requesting $300 million for nutrition aid via USAID. (Note that less than 1 percent of the federal budget goes toward foreign assistance, of which this is a small part.) Lacking access to food is a compelling reason for people to leave their homes and become refugees. Just think about what you might do if you could not feed your children. Helping provide appropriate nutrition will not only save lives, but help prevent further refugee crises.

I want to thank the entire Massachusetts delegation for their support of the Maternal Child Health and Nutrition Letter for fiscal year 2023. The full House has passed the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act. I hope that Sens.
Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey will likewise support the corresponding Senate bill.

In a world where we have the resources to feed everyone, it is inexcusable for so many to suffer the permanent effects of malnutrition or even to face death. The pandemic worsened this situation and now food has become weaponized in Ukraine. It is incumbent that we support robust funding for nutrition, both domestically and globally. Feeding the world is clearly within our reach.

– Leslye Heilig, Great Barrington

To the editor: It is difficult to get the news and not hear about hunger, here or abroad.

Today with the confluence of climate change, the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine, we are living in a perfect storm.

Stateside, we see increasing numbers of folks dependent on our food banks to feed their families. In Great Barrington, The People’s Pantry has seen their numbers quadruple and has, for the first time, needed to initiate a major fundraising campaign. The good news is that Congress recently agreed to continue The Keep Kids Fed Act through the summer. This will provide free meals available at schools for all children regardless of family income. The downside, however, is that for the country as a whole this will regress to an income-based program with the new school year.

We in Massachusetts are most fortunate that our state Legislature just sent a bill to the governor to continue free school meals regardless of income at a cost of $110 million in the newly approved $52.7 billion budget, representing 0.2 percent of the total budget — a drop in the bucket with enormous ROI.

The story internationally is more dire. Given the perfect storm, the United Nations’ World Food Programme has seen the numbers of hungry and starving rise from 80 million to 135 million as a consequence of climate issues, and then to 226 million as a consequence of the pandemic, and now to 345 million as a consequence of the events in Ukraine. He reported these terrifying numbers at a hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where he went on to say that 50 million people in 45 countries are imminently facing famine. We must act now to prevent the destabilization that will follow in the wake of famine and starvation.
Fortunately, USAID recently announced the release of additional funds to treat malnutrition and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously passed, on a bipartisan basis, the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act. Hopefully, the Senate will soon pass this.

You can use your power as a constituent and speak to your members of Congress today. Results, a group I advocate with, will support you to do this. Together, we can and must feed the world.

– Leslye Heilig, Great Barrington

The writer is co-leader of the Together Women Rise Advocacy Chapter and the Massachusetts Group of Results.org.

https://www.berkshireeagle.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/letter-hunger-is-all-around-us/article_6f973e8a-0c3a-11ed-87ac-33ac9c07240a.html
Lame-duck Congress should pass End TB Now Act

December 21, 2022

To the editor: The recent spread of RSV and influenza, as well as the increased number of cases of COVID-19 in the U.S., reminds us that the most infectious and ancient of the respiratory illnesses — tuberculosis — today affects millions around the world.

Even though it is preventable, treatable and curable, TB took the lives of 1.6 million people in 2021. It exploits and exacerbates poverty and disproportionately hurts the marginalized. And because TB and COVID-19 are both airborne diseases, TB resources and expertise were reallocated to address the COVID-19 pandemic, causing us to fall behind on reaching global TB goals. And despite progress in reducing global TB cases over the last decade, this reallocation of resources has caused TB cases to rise again. In 2021, there were 151 cases of tuberculosis in Massachusetts and 7,882 in the entire U.S. However, there were also up to 13 million people living in the U.S. with latent tuberculosis. This centuries-old infection warrants our attention today.

The End TB Now Act would help get us back on track. It would require the U.S. to target existing TB resources to those countries and populations needing it most. It would foster more public-private partnerships in the TB fight and increase accountability for our efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that when we focus our ingenuity, resources and energy, we can solve seemingly insurmountable problems. It’s far past time to do that for the TB pandemic. We have that opportunity today in this lame duck session.

I want to thank Sen. Ed Markey and Rep. Richard Neal for their support of the End TB Now Act (S.3386/H.R. 8654) and urge Sen. Elizabeth Warren to join them before the end of this year. We cannot kick the can down the road repeatedly — the time to put these mandates into law and invest in ending tuberculosis is now.

– Leslye Heilig, Great Barrington
https://www.berkshireeagle.com/opinion/letters_to_editor/letter-lame-duck-congress-should-pass-end-tb-now-act/article_a70b8d96-7fc4-11ed-936e-1f973fe84236.html?fbclid=IwAR028NxMngKVs0k9CqBUmjuQdMXQ65MyqGmOn9GNMUrtZL8a-JLSAzcqO24
Minnesota media
Mississippi media
Missouri media
Regarding the story “Omicron surge is undermining care for other health problems” (Globe, Jan. 21), it is frustrating that despite masking and getting vaccinated we are unable to end this pandemic. The omicron variant has proven once again that the only way to blunt the negative impacts of COVID-19 is to ensure that everyone across the world has access to vaccines and thereby stop the surge of new variants.

To end the pandemic, Congress must provide $17 billion in supplemental funding for the global COVID-19 response in the fiscal year 2022 spending bills.

Acting now to provide vaccines to the low- and middle-income countries is not only the morally correct decision but the most cost-effective strategy to ending the COVID-19 pandemic once and for all.

– Raj Jaladi, St. Louis
I agree with Raj Jaladi’s letter, “U.S. must support global COVID response” (Globe, Jan. 25).

If wealthy nations like the U.S. don’t step up efforts to vaccinate the world, more variants will emerge and the world will continue to lose millions of lives and suffer massive economic losses.

In addition to providing $17 billion in supplemental funding for the 2022 global COVID-19 response, we also need to increase funding to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria. The Global Fund played a critical role in providing emergency funding, knowledge and resources when a pandemic swept our planet. Still, COVID-19 seriously disrupted healthcare. It caused a backslide in the fight against AIDS, TB and malaria.

The Global Fund has enjoyed strong bipartisan support in Congress for two decades. Congress must ensure President Biden doesn’t break tradition in a time of drastically weakened health security. I urge Congressman Billy Long to join his colleague Congresswoman Ann Wagner in signing a letter asking President Biden for an increased pledge to the Global Fund at its 2022 replenishment this fall.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country, MO

https://www.joplinglobe.com/opinion/your-view-billy-long-urged-to-join-global-initiative/article_0a654b18-8744-11ec-8c9e-b39edc4c0422.html
Anti-mandate crowd inconsiderate of unhealthy children

February 25, 2022

Regarding “Can schools require shoes? Lawmaker trips up Attorney General Eric Schmitt with question” (Feb. 17): The conflict between Attorney General Eric Schmitt and state lawmakers mirrors the local conflicts between parents arguing about school masking requirements in public schools.

I wish to remind Schmitt and others that public schools aren’t just for healthy children without complex medical conditions, nor only for students without immunocompromised family members. They do not only employ teachers free of health-risk factors. They are here to meet the educational needs and safety of all children and staff.

The most vulnerable among us are the ones who suffer most, even if infection is not fatal. Long coronavirus is a terrible sentence for a child or teacher already suffering from respiratory problems.

The omicron variant took more lives than delta, and another variant is on the horizon. If people truly want to end a need for masking, I think they should consider what would end the procession of deadly variants. Getting the world to a 70% vaccination rate requires Congress to approve $17 billion in supplemental funding for the global coronavirus response in fiscal year 2022 spending.

In the meantime, masking is our best tool for schools because our communities have not embraced improved ventilation, full distancing or full vaccination.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country

Congress must support global health initiatives

March 22, 2022

We're lucky to live in a country where we talk about approval for booster shots. ("Moderna seeks FDA authorization for 4th dose of COVID shot," Globe, March 17) I just returned from spring break travel, and protection from a third dose offered comfort to my family.

However, while rich countries like ours hoard vaccine doses and offer boosters, billions of people still wait for their first shot. Low-income countries are mostly left unprotected while they battle not only COVID-19, but also killer diseases of poverty — AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria — that surged while the world diverted resources to deal with the newer pandemic.

We need to recover lost progress in global health, keep up the fight against COVID-19, and prepare for future pandemic problems. Showing American leadership to support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria will be critical in these efforts.

I urge President Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his Fiscal Year 2023 budget request. I ask U.S. Sens. Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley as well as U.S. Rep. Billy Long to appropriate the same amount for FY23.

– Summer Levin, St. Louis

World also needs help with the killer diseases of poverty

March 23, 2022

Regarding “Moderna seeks FDA authorization for 4th dose of COVID shot” (March 17): I feel lucky to live in a country where we talk about booster-shot approval. Protection provided by a third dose is important to me as a student now that mask requirements have dropped. Yet billions of people around the world still await their first shot.

Low-income countries have far less protection while they battle not only the coronavirus but also the killer diseases of poverty — AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria — that increased while we diverted resources to deal with the pandemic.

We need to recover lost global health progress, keep fighting the coronavirus, and prepare for future pandemic problems. American leadership to support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria will be critical in these efforts. President Joe Biden should include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his fiscal year 2023 budget request, and lawmakers from Missouri should support this effort.

– Summer Levin, Town and Country

U.S. needs to show support for Global Fund to help fight disease worldwide

April 5, 2022

We've seen major setbacks in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as resources were diverted to deal with COVID-19.

To get back on track with these three diseases, continue fighting COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics, supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is imperative.

Over 20 years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 64% and strengthened health systems around the world.

To continue this vital work, the Global Fund needs at least $18 billion over the next three years.

The Global Fund has always had bipartisan support in Congress, and the U.S. has consistently led efforts by committing at least one-third of the resources needed. The Biden administration and Congress should show leadership again when the U.S. hosts the Global Fund replenishment conference later this year.

I urge President Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his FY23 budget request and Congress, including Rep. Vicky Hartzler, to appropriate the same amount for FY23.

– Mukund Viswanadha is a college student at MU.

US must help fight against global preventable diseases

April 5, 2022

Regarding the letter "World also needs help with the killer diseases of poverty" (March 24): I completely agree that we must provide health resources to underprivileged nations. When I visit India every summer, I am stricken by the living conditions in rural areas that facilitate the spread of disease. However, these issues always felt external to me until June 2021, when coronavirus cases spiked in India. I remember my fear as my family members tested positive, but hospital beds and oxygen tanks became scarce. For the first time, I and other privileged people received a taste of the circumstances that plague low-income nations. I cannot forget that feeling.

I believe Missouri members of Congress should stand with the world in the fight against preventable diseases by allotting $2 billion in funding for the 2023 fiscal year budget.

– Arushi Katyal, Chesterfield

Blunt’s leadership needed on COVID

April 6, 2022

For the past two weeks, Sen. Blunt has been part of the bipartisan group of senators negotiating for a COVID-19 supplemental vote. Despite his reasonable faith effort in containing COVID-19 and helping Missourians, the lack of global COVID-19 funding will hinder the progress made so far in managing COVID-19 and keeping our schools and restaurants open.

We need leadership from Sen. Blunt to break an impasse. We see the effects of our government’s incomplete and insufficient COVID-19 response in the newest BA.2 variant. Without reaching global herd immunity, any amount of funding will fall short of containing emerging variants as contagious as omicron and as deadly as delta variants. No one is safe until we are all safe.

We need Sen. Blunt to step up and champion his Senate colleagues to include the total $5 billion sum USAID has requested for global COVID-19 relief in the upcoming COVID-19 supplemental that he has negotiated for.

– Marta Richenburg, Kansas City

https://www.newspressnow.com/opinion/your_letters/your-letters-april-7-2022/article_e0029336-b5c3-11ec-bfcf-6727f0019598.html
Fight Tuberculosis

April 14, 2022

Reported COVID-19 cases are decreasing, but the world's struggle with tuberculosis should show us that highly infectious diseases continue to be problems after they are considered endemic. TB is the second-leading infectious disease killer worldwide with 1.5 million individuals dying annually.

The coronavirus pandemic worsened the TB situation in the U.S. and around the world when staff and resources were diverted to focus almost exclusively on the COVID-19 response. Experts predict this will result in increased TB numbers and an increase in the mortality rate due to delayed diagnosis.

To put the U.S. back on the path to TB elimination, and to make significant progress toward ending TB globally, Congress should fund the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s domestic TB program at $225 million and the U.S. Agency for International Development’s TB program at $1 billion in the 2023 budget.

Missouri U.S. Rep. Ann Wagner has co-authored a letter to House leadership in support of these TB funding levels. I urge Reps. Sam Graves and Emanuel Cleaver to join her in this bipartisan action for global health.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country, Missouri

https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article260376037.html
Advocacy leader’s work inspires others to become activists

Bill Motchan, Special to the Jewish Light

May 4, 2022

If you’ve ever signed a petition, written a letter to the editor or marched for a cause you believe in, you participated in a form of advocacy. It’s an act of free speech that can help call attention to important issues.

Cindy Levin has made advocacy her life’s work. Levin, a mother of two teenage girls and a member of Congregation Shaare Emeth, began her advocacy work in 2003 after her first child was born. Breastfeeding proved difficult, and her daughter wasn’t getting enough food. Her doctor told her to start using a bottle, which worked.

“It was pretty simple, but it got me thinking about moms around the world who don’t have access to clean water or extra formula, and it just kind of opened up a whole host of things that I hadn’t thought about before,” said Levin, 50.

Levin got involved with the hunger and nutrition advocacy group Bread for the World (online at bread.org) where she learned the basics of writing letters to Congress. That evolved into making calls to lawmakers, writing letters to the editor and, eventually, lobbying.

“There are organizations that can teach you how to sit down and talk about these important nonpartisan issues in a very civil way,” Levin said. “And I got this notion that there are other moms who would find empowerment and fulfillment doing that if I could write a book and talk about it more.”

That was the genesis of Levin’s first book, published this month. It’s called “From Changing Diapers to Changing the World: Why Moms Make Great Advocates and How to Get Started.” The book, available on Amazon.com, is a how-to for nascent
advocates who are passionate about an issue and willing to make their voices heard.

“My book is designed with discussion questions at the end of each chapter, so that moms can use it alone for reflection or gather and talk together about advocacy and what kinds of issues they would like to affect in the world,” Levin said. “My goal is to empower moms to move from thinking, ‘I can't change the world. I'm just a mom,’ to ‘I can change the world because I'm a mom!’

Prior to motherhood, Levin was an engineer with a career at General Motors. Her natural analytical side came in handy when she started working on advocacy projects that required talking to members of Congress about numbers and statistics. Levin said it's essential for citizens to tell elected officials what's on their mind.

“We have the right and the power as constituents to do that,” she said. “In the book, I talk about my nonpartisan and relational approach to advocacy. The kind of advocacy I promote is when you get to know the person on the other end of the line. For instance, with (Missouri U.S.) Sen. Roy Blunt, we don't agree on everything. In fact, I've never met a member of Congress that I've agreed on every single thing with, but (Blunt's) aide knows who I am. She knows my name, she knows me by sight.”

Levin said Blunt understands issues like global health, and he sits on the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

“He is one of our allies when it comes to understanding things about polio, HIV/AIDS and COVID,” she said. “So it's nice to know that when I send things up to his aide, she knows who I am.”


Lawmakers benefit from hearing from advocates, Levin said, because they don't always have time to research the nitty gritty of every issue. An advocate like her is doing it out of a sense of service to the community, unlike lobbyists, who also earn a paycheck for their efforts.
A big part of advocacy is creating awareness of emerging issues, such as COVID was two years ago. Because Levin is committed to global health, she was trying to raise awareness at the outset of the pandemic.

“I was on Capitol Hill for a Shot@Life conference, and I was sitting in (Missouri Republican) congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer's office with him, talking about how bad I thought COVID-19 was going to be,” she said. “Then everything went into shutdown, but that’s one of the things that I think is great about being an activist, when you’re highly involved and something happens. At least I could put my head on the pillow and say, ‘I did everything that I could, and I was in there talking to the decision-makers.’”

Levin has also mentored other advocates, among them Sarah Borgstede, a Belleville mom who was new to advocacy before meeting Levin in 2016. She subsequently became Levin’s co-leader of the RESULTS St. Louis group working on global poverty.

Borgstede said, “Working with Cindy inspired me to start a group in my hometown because I wanted to find more advocates who live in the same state and congressional district that I do. Members of Congress want to hear from their own constituents.

“Cindy taught me to be persistent, to understand that advocacy is something that you undertake over time as lots of small actions come together to create powerful influence. And Cindy taught me how to use my own experiences in life to speak powerfully about public policy. I’m so glad she’s written her book so that more people out there can have the kinds of transformative advocacy experiences that I have had.”

Borgstede eventually started her own RESULTS chapter in Belleville. She works for ACTION, an organization advocating for global tuberculosis programs.

Levin said, “The most rewarding part is when I can bring somebody else in to advocate, and that means that the movement is growing. When I can see, my actions have a greater impact than just what I'm personally able to do.”
Another advocate who got his start with Levin is Raj Jaladi, a student at Parkway West High School, who directs classmates and adults in taking action.

“I have been advocating with Cindy since sixth grade,” Jaladi said. “I’m now in 10th grade, and I am the group co-leader for RESULTS St. Louis. The biggest thing I love about Cindy is that she gives us high school and middle school students the opportunity to jump in and do various advocacy activities irrespective of our age or our experience. She gives everyone equal opportunity to lead and dive into leadership roles such as media leader, fundraising leader, point person to a member of Congress, and even as a group co-leader.

“I have learned from Cindy to be bipartisan, keeping my political inclinations on the sidelines, avoiding the heat of a partisan discussion and staying laser-focused on the problem and the solution. The policies and bills we advocate for, be it tax credits or vaccine supply, our talking points are exactly the same if we are meeting with a congressional member who is a Democrat or Republican.”

Upcoming event: What would you change about the world if you could?

When: 10-11:30 a.m., Sunday, May 15

Where: Congregation Shaare Emeth, 11645 Ladue Road


More info: An in-person discussion about the many ways to be an advocate with congregant Cynthia “Cindy” Levin.

Legislation might help solve baby formula problem

May 24, 2022

Regarding “First formula flights from Europe to arrive this weekend,” (May 21) I’m heartened by the international action to help with the baby formula shortage. My baby relied on formula before my breastmilk fully came in. I tried to feed her, not knowing what was wrong. On Christmas Eve, my husband had to go out and buy formula because our baby was starving. That’s when I began to understand the desperation of mothers around the world who cannot feed their children.

Even before the pandemic, malnutrition was an underlying cause of almost half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5. Because of the coronavirus, approximately 168,000 additional children under 5 could die by 2022.

We have an opportunity to act globally for undernourished infants. The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act is a bipartisan bill calling for a coordinated U.S. Agency for International Development strategy, clear targets, and solid interventions so assistance reaches the most impoverished children.

Rep. Ann Wagner of Ballwin has already signed on to it. Sens. Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley, along with Reps. Cori Bush and Blaine Luetkemeyer, should join her in cosponsoring this act. No matter where they live, all children deserve a strong start in life.

– Cynthia Levin, Town and Country

We must act now for undernourished infants

May 25, 2022

I'm relieved to hear there may be upcoming relief for the baby formula shortage. ("FDA head: Baby formula factory could reopen by next week" Globe, May 19).

I empathize strongly with mothers reliant on formula. My baby relied on formula for several days before my breastmilk fully came in. On Christmas Eve, my husband had to go out and buy formula because our baby was starving. That’s when I began to understand the desperation of mothers around the world who cannot feed their children.

Even before COVID-19, malnutrition was an underlying cause of almost half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5. Because of the pandemic, approximately 168,000 additional children under age 5 could die in 2022.

We have a chance now to act globally for undernourished infants. The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act is a bipartisan bill calling for a coordinated USAID strategy, clear targets and solid interventions so assistance reaches the most impoverished children.


– Cynthia Levin, Town and Country

https://www.joplinglobe.com/opinion/your-view-we-must-act-now-for-undernourished-infants/article_1c1b7a44-d933-11ec-b638-cbc09ab96abf.html
I love hearing about mothers helping mothers, as the Los Angeles Times recently noted in a story about lactating moms donating breastmilk during the infant formula shortage.

It reminds me how I was moved to start advocating for malnourished children after my baby relied on formula for several days before my breastmilk fully came in. I thought I was doing the right thing by breastfeeding but discovered my baby was starving. Thanks to formula, my child got the calories and nutrients she needed. But I began to understand the desperation of mothers around the world who can't feed their children.

Even before COVID-19, malnutrition was an underlying cause of almost half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5. Because of the pandemic, about 168,000 additional children under 5 are expected to die by the end of 2022, according to one recent study.

We have a chance to help undernourished infants. The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act is a bipartisan bill calling for a coordinated U.S. Agency for International Development strategy, clear targets and solid interventions so assistance reaches the most impoverished children.


– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country, Missouri

https://www.kansascity.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article261598722.html
Malnutrition in children is worsening around the globe

June 6, 2022

A recent article in the Columbian Missourian explained how the baby formula shortage is causing trouble for infants and mothers across the country, highlighting just how important it is to ensure that children have access to proper nutrition.

We must work to tackle a wider problem of malnourishment among children that has only worsened in recent years.

Even before COVID-19, malnutrition was an underlying cause of almost half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5 around the world.

Due to the pandemic, an additional 168,000 children under 5 are expected to die by the end of 2022, according to one recent study.

The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act is a bipartisan bill calling for a coordinated U.S. Agency for International Development strategy, clear targets, and specific interventions in order for assistance to reach the most impoverished children.

I would like to thank all House members from Missouri, including Rep. Vicky Hartzler and Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer, for voting for the bill and helping it pass through the House.

I urge Sen. Roy Blunt and Sen. Josh Hawley to support the bill as it is voted on in the Senate.

– Mukund Viswanadha is a college student at MU.
In response to “Advocacy leaders work inspires others to become activists” (May 4, 2022) about Cynthia Changyit Levin: Like many people, I wanted to “do something” about global health but was paralyzed into inaction because every effort seemed too small. I joined Results in 7th grade because I was friends with Levin’s daughter but did not become an active member until March 2020.

Levin has been so supportive as she helped me draft emails to representatives and op-eds. Because of her, I have learned so much about health policy on the national and international level.

One of Results’ goals right now is to convince lawmakers to extend the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. These pieces of legislation provide qualifying low-income families with tax breaks and help front line workers access affordable housing. As a result of these policies in 2021, child poverty sank to record lows and many workers could make ends meet. I have been making phone calls to the offices of Senators Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley asking them to extend these provisions. In the past, my friends and I have also gotten together to write members of congress emails and handwritten notes. In some cases we have even received replies from their offices.

My favorite Results memory is sitting in Congresswoman Ann Wagner’s office talking about maternal and child health bills. She was patient and responsive, listening to each of us as we presented the cause before she agreed to sign onto it. It is conversations like these that make me continue advocacy, because I feel that I can influence the priorities of my representatives.

I think that more and more people are turning to advocacy organizations because we believe policy changes are the most effective solution to issues like climate
change, wealth inequality and the spread of disease. If you are interested in joining Results, you can find instructions on how to get involved at https://results.org

We would love to see any new members at one of our meetings.

– Arushi Katyal, Chesterfield

https://stljewishlight.org/opinion/letters-to-editor/letters-to-the-editor-june-8-2021/
Better nutrition helps fight preventable childhood deaths

July 22, 2022

The article “25 million kids missed routine vaccinations because of COVID” (July 15) sounds a desperate global alarm. Childhood vaccinations, common for us here in Missouri, are a sure way to save lives. Impoverished children around the world need a chance at a healthy life, which includes not only vaccines but proper nutrition.

Before the pandemic, child malnutrition was an underlying cause of nearly half of all preventable deaths of children under age 5. The coronavirus made it worse. The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that 22% of the world's children under 5 are now stunted due to malnutrition. Proper nutrition is necessary to prevent stunting and preventable child deaths.

The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act sets clear targets for reaching the most impoverished children and families. The House has approved the bill, and I hope the Senate follows suit.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country

Pushing a stroller while advocating for change: St. Louis author says moms can do both

By Jane Henderson

August 14, 2022

Cynthia Changyit Levin prepared her 4-year-old to meet a congresswoman, dressing the child nicely and bringing along paper and markers to keep her occupied.

While Levin presented her message, she realized the quiet girl was up to something: coloring her hand with a red marker that also threatened to stain unsuspecting objects. Oops.

The bemused legislator, aides, parent and child all headed to a restroom sink to avert a mess. “I never brought markers again,” Levin says with a laugh. But those kinds of meetings can be memorable for parent and legislator alike, she notes.

Juggling motherhood and activism has been part of Levin's family life for 15 years. A mechanical engineer and former project manager, she's now written “From Changing Diapers to Changing the World,” a book encouraging other mothers who want to work for a better future for themselves and their children.

In plain, easy-to-understand language, Levin writes about simple ways to get started making phone calls or writing letters for important causes and how to build toward what she says is a “gold standard” of advocacy — cultivating relationships with federal legislators from her state.

In the book's introduction, she writes:

“Although there are many dad-advocates I respect and admire, I'm writing this book for mothers for two reasons. First, motherhood is my own personal experience and
the one I know best. Second, I want to promote a new path for moms who have trouble seeing their own potential to influence.

“I encounter a distressingly high number of mothers who wrestle with power and self-identity issues as they navigate shifting expectations in professional and domestic roles. While this can be frustrating, motherhood also enables women to redefine our roles in life and create new visions of ourselves.”

Levin, now 50, has long been concerned about hunger and poverty issues. Although most of her non-partisan activism has been as a volunteer, she was employed for several years by RESULTS, which works to end poverty. She writes about tactics using respect, about hard-fought successes and about how her two children were involved (one, a freshman at Johns Hopkins University this fall, plans to major in global health).

With her book, the Town and Country resident says she wants to inspire women to do what they can: “The more moms I can get involved, the better.”

She talked in person and answered questions by email.

Q • Why is activism appealing to moms?

A • I think there are two main reasons. First, moms are naturally deeply driven to protect their children. They’re quick to act when they see something that threatens kids such as gun violence in schools or lack of health insurance that would cover something their own child needs.

Second, they want their kids to have bright futures, so even an issue like climate change that might seem like a less immediate threat is troublesome since the worst effects of it will happen to our children long after we are gone if we don’t act in the present.

Q • You became interested in activism because of poverty and hunger issues, right? But nobody is really for hunger. Does that make it an easy thing to advocate for?
A • No member of Congress campaigns on a pro-hunger platform, but unfortunately there are elected officials who are against increased funding for poverty and nutrition programs or those who simply assume that someone else will take care of it. Unlike a COVID-19 variant or war in the Ukraine, hunger and poor nutrition aren’t flashy new disasters to talk about, even though they are directly related to those recent crises. It can be tough to get the attention of members on new ways to think about fighting hunger — like protecting food systems (the whole process of how we get food from farm to fork) — in addition to providing direct shipments of food.

Q • Have you become involved in other issues?

A • I do advocate for other causes because so many issues are interrelated. My general area of advocacy is poverty, but that regularly intersects with climate, education, reproductive justice and gun violence, so it makes sense for me to speak out on those issues as well.

Q • I imagine that many mothers may now be interested in abortion/contraception in light of the Supreme Court ruling. Have you talked to any?

A • Sometimes these days, I feel like we talk about little else in my circle of mothers! Now that the Missouri primary elections are over, I expect we’ll be talking about it more and more between now and November. I recently held a Zoom book discussion to talk about “A Complicated Choice” by abortion activist Katey Zeh to help us process our feelings about it.

I find older moms my age are personally worried about our reproductive freedom because an unexpected pregnancy would be a danger to health and mean raising a child as a senior citizen. We also worry about the rights of our high school and college-aged children. I hear younger mothers worrying about being able to get the health care they need for a miscarriage or wanting to keep their plans and dreams intact even if they experience an unexpected pregnancy. I feel like all moms across many ages and demographics are waking up to how abortion procedures are a part of health care necessary to protecting the physical and mental health of mothers.
Q • What other issues are mothers particularly interested in?

A • Top issues on the minds of moms reaching out to me in the last year have been gun violence, climate, education and COVID safety. Some workplace justice issues concerning working moms in particular include equal pay, paid family and medical leave, paid sick leave and breastfeeding rights.

Q • What are your goals now?

A • My goals used to focus on learning effective advocacy strategies and tools to grow the influence I could have as a regular person outside of the political machine. Yet it became clear to me that there are far too many needed actions on many different issues even for the very capable activists who are already volunteering.

My goal now is to reach out to as many mothers as possible and help grow the movement of people working toward a better future for us and our children. Publishing my book was a big step in that direction.

Q • Have you heard from more people since publishing your book?

A • Yes! I love it when moms reach out asking me to speak to their groups about how to be more engaged in advocacy. I was thrilled when a mom with a group of activists asked me to do a workshop on how to write letters to the editor. They are accustomed to making phone calls and meetings with state legislators but want to learn to take a next step. Also, I’ve been able to speak to PTA groups in Illinois and Wisconsin that would not have been available to me before the book was released.

Q • Your book’s third part is about easy ways to become an activist. What are a couple of things to do without experience?

A • Phone calls to elected officials and writing handwritten letters are the easiest actions I recommend to novice activists. When you have a script from a reputable advocacy organization to follow, it can be both easy and empowering. Even as an experienced advocate, I still call Congress when I want a quick confidence boost. When everything else in my day is spinning out of control, I find it empowering to make a phone call to my representative. I can hang up the phone after leaving my
10-second message and think: “There. I did that. I helped.” Other things might still go wrong, but after I've made that call, no one can take that feeling away from me.

Q • You write about meeting congressmen and women. Where on the scale does that fall in effective activism? Also, what are a couple of the most effective things one can do?

A • To me, meeting regularly with members of Congress to the point where you build a relationship is the gold standard of activism. Not everyone has the time to cultivate that kind of access, but if you can actually become a resource for your members of Congress and their aides, you know you're having great impact.

The first time I got a call from a congressional staffer asking for more information on an issue, I practically fell out of my chair in surprise! Now, I feel that kind of working relationship is what I'm always working toward.

Citizen activism helps to address world hunger problem

August 16, 2022

Regarding "Pushing a stroller while advocating for change: St. Louis author says moms can do both" (Aug. 14): For everyone who watches the news with feelings of helplessness and despair, activist mom Cynthia Changyit Levin's book is a dose of good medicine.

Levin counsels us on simple, practical ways we can win policy changes. Thousands of Bread for the World members from across the country have backed the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act for the last year, and we were thrilled to see it pass the House with a bipartisan majority.

We now urge the Senate to pass it also. It would be a victory for millions of hungry people, and also a testament to citizen activism like Cynthia Levin’s.

– Jane Klopfenstein, Edwardsville

(this letter was written by a non-RESULTS person who was responding to the 8/14/22 article about Cindy Levin’s RESULTS advocacy)

Bettering global education is a worthy goal of activists

August 19, 2022

Regarding “Pushing a stroller while advocating for change: St. Louis author says moms can do both” (Aug. 14): I have been lucky to be an advocate in St. Louis and have volunteered for many years with the author of the book that is profiled, Cynthia Changyit Levin. I have learned a lot from her and others who never give up in their work to make the world a better place. And they include not only moms, but people of all ages and backgrounds.

Over time, I have learned to be more confident in my abilities and stay motivated. There is so much to keep up with these days and it can be overwhelming, but there is legislation out there already that can really help those in need. For example, the READ Act needs to be reauthorized. This enables the U.S. to lead on global equity in access to basic education. Bolstering global education is critical given the toll COVID-19 has taken on accessing quality education in low-income settings. It will help the U.S. achieve key global education goals. I will keep asking my legislators to take the kind of action that will impact lives.

– Amy Morros, St. Louis

https://www.stltoday.com/opinion/mailbag/letter-bettering-global-education-is-a-worthy-goal-of-activists/article_cf80ce16-5dc0-55ed-a2b5-5e5483dec44e.html
Congress must reauthorize READ Act

August 26, 2022

Regarding “Joplin students eager to return to school after summer break,” (Globe, Aug. 22), as we return to school in person and try to achieve close to pre-pandemic normalcy in schools, the situation across the globe is dismal.

School closures continue to disrupt the education of more than 616 million students across the globe, according to UNICEF research. Additional crises in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen and more have only increased those education gaps, with girls, low-income children and children with disabilities facing the greatest barriers to education.

One way to fight this education crisis head-on is to reauthorize the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development Act for five more years. The original READ Act of 2017 propelled USAID toward a new strategy focused on expanding equitable access to education, and their programs reached more than 33.4 million students in 73 countries in 2021.

We need to build on this success and reverse the toll COVID-19 has had on education, particularly in low-income settings.


- Raj Jaladi, St. Louis

Lawmakers should address education around the globe
August 26, 2022

Regarding “Columbia students return optimistic for more normal school year” (Missourian, Aug 23), it is exciting to get back to school in person without any pandemic restrictions. However, for many across the world, the situation is far from reality.

UNICEF research shows that school closures still affect more than 616 million students. This education gap will have a devastating impact on low-income communities around the world, becoming more prone to violence and poverty in the future.

Reauthorizing the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act for five years to continue access to basic education for children around the globe is a powerful solution to this education crisis.

The original READ Act of 2017 propelled USAID toward a new strategy focused on expanding equitable access to education, and their programs reached more than 33.4 million students in 73 countries in 2021.

We need to build on this success and fight the effects of the pandemic proactively. I urge Rep. Vicky Hartzler and Sens. Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley to cosponsor the READ Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 (H.R.7240, S.3938)

– Raj Jaladi is a junior at Parkway West High School and is the group co-leader for Results St. Louis, an advocacy organization working to end poverty.

https://www.columbiamissourian.com/opinion/letters_to_the_editor/letter-to-the-editor-lawmakers-should-address-education-around-the-globe/article_62a12772-24db-11ed-a5fd-df308e63abd2.html
Lawmakers should help fight a tuberculosis resurgence

September 12, 2022

Recent health news is all about the coronavirus and Monkeypox these days, but back when I was growing up in St. Louis, tuberculosis was the second leading infectious disease killer in the world.

That was actually one month ago. I'm 18.

Tuberculosis is definitely still a major global health threat, with a disproportionate impact on impoverished communities. In fact, more than 10 million people contracted TB in 2020 alone and deaths from it have increased for the first time in more than a decade because of coronavirus disruptions. Since the beginning of the pandemic, TB detection dropped by a whopping 50%.

Now, I'm starting college to study public health, and I see an opportunity to get back on track in the fight against TB. I think Sens. Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley and Reps. Cori Bush and Ann Wagner should cosponsor the End TB Now Act.

– Yara Changyit-Levin, Town and Country

Before retiring, Blunt should back the child tax credit

December 10, 2022

I appreciate retiring Sen. Roy Blunt’s comments about bipartisanship in his final Senate address. ("Roy Blunt stresses the importance of bipartisanship in farewell speech to US Senate,” Dec. 7) I’m grateful for all the years he worked with both Republicans and Democrats on programs to fight infectious diseases worldwide. But there are still two significant nonpartisan pieces of legislation he can support to help people struggling in poverty.

First, he can restore an expanded Child Tax Credit to help parents provide necessities for families. Second, he can sign onto the End Tuberculosis Now Act, a bill directing the U.S. Agency for International Development to set bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of tuberculosis.

In these last weeks of 2022, Sens. Blunt and Josh Hawley should act quickly to support these two pieces of legislation.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, *Town and Country*

Thanks, Sen. Blunt

December 11, 2022

I appreciate Sen. Roy Blunt's comments about bipartisanship. (Dec. 8, 1A, “Blunt stresses importance of bipartisanship in farewell”) I’m grateful for all the years he worked with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support programs to fight global infectious diseases.

Blunt said goodbye on the Senate floor, yet there are still two significant ways he can still support people struggling in poverty. First, he can help restore an expanded child tax credit so parents can provide necessities for families. A recent Washington University study reported the most common uses of child tax credit payments among Missouri families were buying food, purchasing clothing and paying bills.

Second, he can sign onto the End TB Now Act, S.3386/H.R.8654, directing the U.S. Agency for International Development to set bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of tuberculosis.

In the remaining weeks of 2022, Blunt and Sen. Josh Hawley should include an expanded, monthly CTC for all low-income families in an end-of-year tax bill and co-sign the End TB Now Act.

– Cynthia Changyit Levin, Town and Country, Missouri

https://amp.kansascity.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article269777522.html
Montana media
Nebraska media
Nevada media
Unity can help solve problems

March 16, 2022

It’s encouraging to see President Joe Biden gather the world together to oppose Russia’s unprovoked attack on Ukraine (“We will be OK if we stick together” by Brian Greenspun, March 6).

Working together is our best hope. Biden is also encouraging the world to gather together to more successfully battle global pandemics by hosting this year’s funding conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The fund has worked with low- and middle-income countries to successfully battle disease, including COVID-19, while bolstering these countries’ health care systems in the process.

Over the past 20 years, this partnership has saved tens of millions of lives. Perhaps these joint efforts will not only save lives, but encourage countries to work together to deal with the many problems that face our world.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Wash.

Fight the good fight with Biden

August 7, 2022

There's been so much change in the world: war in Ukraine, a pandemic, climate change, expanding poverty. What are we to do?

We respond as President Joe Biden did: by working to bring the world together, backing Ukraine, supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, battling malnutrition around the world, and fighting climate change and the wealth gap with new legislation.

As the midterms approach, let's be sure the candidates we vote for are backing these positive changes. Let's do our part to make this a new beginning of a better world.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Wash.

New Hampshire media
New Jersey media
Support needed now more than ever for disease and pandemic prep

March 20, 2022

I'm excited that the U.S. is hosting the Seventh Replenishment Conference for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria later this year. This will be an opportunity to regain momentum on these three diseases and improve pandemic preparedness.

We need U.S. leadership to step up now as the COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on every aspect of global health, with tuberculosis services being disproportionately affected. According to the World Health Organization, TB case detection has plummeted and tuberculosis deaths have increased. The Global Fund has a proven track record of effectively working with over 120 countries to address pandemics saving 44 million lives.

Recently the Global Fund has been on the front lines of the COVID-19 for testing, treatments, personal protective equipment (PPE), and critical elements of health system strengthening.

I ask readers to encourage our local representatives to support funding for the Global Fund.

– David Burns, Hackettstown

New Mexico media
New York media
An ounce of prep

February 21, 2022

Snohomish, Wash.: We need more of this evaluation of pandemic handling and preparation (“The COVID lessons never to forget,” op-ed, Feb. 17). One important lesson not mentioned is that we are in this together — everyone on the planet. Without access to health care and responses such as vaccines available to all, variants have kept COVID surging, infecting and killing. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria has been doing this work for 20 years with low- and middle-income countries to strengthen health care systems and battle disease. President Biden has seen the importance of this team effort and is holding this year’s replenishment conference for the Global Fund. Nearly 100 members of Congress have already signed a letter calling for a bold pledge from America, which would signal to other countries to do the same. Call your members of Congress to find out if they support this effort.

– Willie Dickerson

Stefanik should support GFATM

April 2, 2022

One lesson we should learn from COVID is that to stop a pandemic, we need robust health care systems in place to stop dangerous diseases from spreading and mutating. Otherwise, we'll eventually face diseases even worse than COVID.

Before COVID, tuberculosis was annually killing roughly 1.4 million people and sickening almost 9 million. As bad as those numbers are, they're an improvement. Thanks to President Bush's PEPFAR program and congressional contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria over the last 20 years, TB was no longer killing 2 million a year. Then COVID hit.

The health care systems that PEPFAR and the GFATM helped create and build switched from fighting TB to COVID. According to the Stop TB Partnership, 12 months of the COVID-19 pandemic reversed a dozen years of progress in fighting TB in lower-income countries with the highest TB burden.

The GFATM has a three-year plan to restore the lost progress against TB and continue building and expanding health care systems to head off future diseases before they become pandemics. But to do that, the GFATM needs at least $18 billion.

As a U.S. citizen, I'm proud the U.S. contributes about one-third of the money the GFATM uses to help other countries. I urge Representative Stefanik to support our great country in continuing its leadership role in the GFATM by supporting a $2 billion investment in the GFATM. I thank her and her staff for previous support of this program.

– Susan Oehser, Bakers Mills
https://poststar.com/opinion/letters/letter-to-the-editor-stefanik-should-support-gfatm/article_b1ab3c30-af70-11ec-8bd0-4b120beabe98.html
End TB Now Act would get fight started again

December 8, 2022

COVID-19 has shown us the devastating effects of a deadly infectious disease. However, for decades, tuberculosis has been the world’s deadliest infectious disease.

Although TB is predominantly a disease of poverty, those living in NYC are also vulnerable. Those of us who are old enough may remember the TB epidemic in NYC in the 1990s. Unfortunately, the progress made in fighting global TB has been reversed due to COVID-19.

A new report from the WHO shows that TB mortality increased in 2021 to 1.6 million people, with new cases up for the first time in years. Congress has the opportunity to get things moving in the right direction again with the End TB Now Act. This bill would require the U.S. to target existing TB resources to the countries and populations who need them most, while also fostering more public-private partnerships in the TB fight, and increasing accountability and reporting to Congress.

I would like to thank Rep. Nicole Malliotakis for her past support on the TB issue, and urge her to take action again at this critical time by co-sponsoring the End TB Now Act.

– Joanne DiDato, Port Richmond Center

North Carolina media
Let's work towards an end to this pandemic

January 29, 2022

To the Editor:

I'm applying to graduate schools abroad currently, and while exciting, I have no idea what academic life, or public life in general, will look like in the fall. I graduated with my undergraduate degree in May 2020, in the height of the pandemic, leaving campus abruptly in March 2020 and watching graduation from my parents' living room. Two years later, I'm still working remotely as my company pushes back our return to office date yet again. But I remind myself I'm lucky I am healthy and financially stable.

COVID rages on and somehow two years into this pandemic, we're still fighting for vaccines for all. Although everyone in the US is able to receive two, and even three, doses of the vaccine, this is not the case for people living in low- and middle-income countries. The world has a global goal of vaccinating 70% of the population by September 2022 and the estimated cost of this is $63 billion, where the United States' fair share is $17 billion. Congress must provide $17 billion in supplemental funding in the FY22 spending bills to ensure everyone globally has access to vaccines.

Let's work towards an end to this pandemic.

Maggie Cech, Durham

https://www.sanfordherald.com/archives/letter-lets-work-towards-an-end-to-this-pandemic/article_700830c3-3dbd-582e-939a-ee160b1f97df.html
COVID has taken a toll on global health

April 18, 2022

The U.S. has a legacy in global health leadership. In partnership with developing countries, the U.S. has led the fight against hunger and poverty by investing in smart global development programs that improve health, education and building brighter futures.

COVID has taken a toll on global health beyond the immediate effects of the virus. More children are malnourished, fewer people have had access to testing and treatment for AIDS, TB, and malaria, and more people have died. According to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, the pandemic has set back progress on tuberculosis by more than 10 years.

The State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee is considering global health spending for FY 2023. It is critical to urge our members of Congress to include:

$300 million for global nutrition $1 billion for global tuberculosis $2 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria

Funding these programs is compassionate but it’s also smart for national security and economics.

– Howard Berkowitz, Candler

https://ashevillecitizentimes-nc.newsmemory.com/?publink=086ace330_1348427
Ask Senators to co-sponsor legislation to fight TB

October 26, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused havoc in health care, creating significant setbacks combating preventable diseases such as tuberculosis. The World Health Organization Global TB Report confirmed the first increase in TB deaths in over a decade. In 2020, over 10 million new cases of TB with 1.5 million deaths globally. The lack of investment and added strain on the health systems in low-income nations means the global End TB Strategy and United Nations High Level Meeting targets for TB are now failing to achieve objectives.

Thus far repeated requests of Senators Tillis and Burr have failed to move them to co-sponsor crucial bipartisan legislation called the End TB Now Act (S.3386). The bills call on the U.S. Agency for International Development to set aggressive targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of TB. Please add your voices by contacting Senators Tillis and Burr, and asking that they co-sponsor this important legislation.

– Howard Berkowitz, Candler

No online link
North Dakota media
Moorhead grad pens book encouraging mothers to become advocates

*Cynthia Changyit Levin became global poverty advocate while raising two young children*

By Danielle A. Teigen

October 19, 2022

When Cynthia Changyit Levin became a mother 18 years ago, she had a serious identity crisis after leaving her job as an engineer to stay home and raise her child.

“I had a journey of 2-3 years where I was floundering about, thinking that I didn’t know what I was doing now that I’d given up my career,” she explained.

As a new mother, Levin felt such sadness knowing mothers in underprivileged countries couldn’t feed or care for their children, and she wanted to do something.

But what?

She wrote a letter to the editor about global poverty initiatives with her child on her lap. She started attending meetings to learn more about advocating for work that could reduce global poverty. She met her U.S. Representative to talk about sponsoring a bill with her child in tow.

Today, Levin is a known global poverty advocate whose work has taken her to Uganda, Washington, D.C., and more.

She writes about her experiences and how other mothers can become advocates in her book, “From Changing Diapers to Changing the World: Why Moms Make Great Advocates and How to Get Started.”
She offers practical advice and tips for busy moms who see a need and want to fill that need, even when they seem to be short on time and energy.

“I want to take moms from seeing motherhood as a limitation to seeing it as a wonderful and unique asset,” she said. “I want moms to start thinking, ‘I can change the world because I’m a mom.’”

Levin graduated from Moorhead High School in 1989, and her mom worked in the Clay County Health Department during the peak of the AIDS crisis. She recalls thinking that civic engagement ended simply to voting.

“I remember being a Campfire Girl who handed out programs at the League of Women Voters debates,” she said.

Now, having seen another global health crisis and watching as her oldest child pursues a degree at Johns Hopkins in global health, Levin realizes so many of these seemingly unrelated experiences all stem from advocacy work.

“I never thought back then that I’d travel to Uganda or advocate in Washington, D.C.; I didn’t think advocacy was something I could do, even though I was aware that public policy could affect people’s lives,” she said. “Now I can draw a line between what my mom was doing to my early advocacy work to my child studying global health and see that it’s all very connected.”

Levin started toying with the idea of writing a book more than 10 years ago and originally thought she’d produce a short book about being an advocate with just young children. As she got more involved in advocacy work, she realized the book needed to expand.

“I mean, it doesn’t take 10 years to write a book but it took me that long because I was living it,” she explained.

For anyone wanting to get more involved in advocacy work, Levin encourages starting with some introspection. “Advocacy is very personal; you will be the best advocate for something you care about,” she said. “So it’s okay to take time for ourselves to meditate or ruminate on things going on, and listen to your body, listen to what you are reacting to.”
She writes in the book that “advocacy is simply expressing yourself to inspire action from another person with the power to help.” Levin breaks down her information in three parts: why moms make great advocates, how to start and practical advice, with ideas for how mothers can still create meaningful change even if they only have 5 minutes or 20 minutes in the middle of the night while holding a baby.

Once a mom knows what issues she’s passionate about and would want to become an advocate for, Levin listed three organizations that teach people the necessary skills for advocacy work: RESULTS, MomsRising, and Citizens’ Climate Lobby.

“It’s my joy to talk to people and help them understand this (work) is something they can do and get involved with,” she explained.

Her book offers many ideas for how moms (and all parents, really) can start taking small steps in their advocacy work and even involve children. She writes: “What happens if you don’t make time to become the best person you want to be?...Kids are little pitchers with big ears; what are you pouring in there?”

Levin shared stories in the book about her children becoming advocates in their own right after watching her over the years. One child organized a peaceful protest after a classmate had soccer playing at recess revoked and presented to the principal a list of changes, written in crayon no less.

Today, Levin’s children are almost 17 and 19 years old, and “they are becoming emerging advocates,” she shared. Yara Changyit-Levin is studying global health in Baltimore while her younger daughter Summer Levin is still assessing what she’d like to pursue after high school. Levin and Yara are actually writing a book tentatively titled “Use Your Outside Voice” to help parents and teens understand how to advocate successfully in a way that makes sense for a youth audience.

Levin’s book is available on her website – www.changyit.com – as well as other book retailers like Amazon, Barnes & Noble and independent bookstores.

Ohio media
Improved US spending on global maternal and child health could help save millions of lives

April 20, 2022

More than five million children die before their fifth birthday every year, with malnutrition a leading underlying cause. According to a recent “Dear Colleague” letter from four members of Congress, experts estimate that by the end of 2022, an additional 17 million children will be severely malnourished.

It is rare for problems in our world to have clear answers, but global malnutrition is solvable. The most effective solutions support both mothers and children. Investments in maternal and child health and nutrition through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provide direct nutrition intervention, access to front-line health workers, and vaccine access through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Vitamin A supplementation, an example of high-impact nutrition intervention, can reduce deaths by up to 24%.

These solutions are only possible if resourced effectively. As we approach appropriations for the coming year, the United States should demonstrate its leadership by committing $1.1 billion for the Maternal and Child Health account — which includes $290 million for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance — and $300 million for the Nutrition Account within the USAID Global Health Programs account. We need to prove our commitment to justice by acting now to protect the most vulnerable mothers and children.

– Leah Hansler, Cleveland Heights

A.J. Wagner belonged to the whole community

By Nick Arena

September 13, 2022

When I first met A.J. Wagner (former Montgomery County Auditor and Judge), it was the late winter of 1995. My friend Megan Dixon had written a letter to the editor of the Dayton City Paper announcing our organizing meeting for RESULTS, an anti-poverty advocacy group. It was to be a meeting of citizens who wanted to work to end poverty everywhere by lobbying the US Congress on ways they could redirect funding to help those most in need.

A.J. did something I had never seen anyone do up to that time in my years with RESULTS: he just showed up at the meeting in an Oregon District restaurant. Just from reading the letter. He was the Montgomery County Auditor at the time. He joined the Dayton volunteer group that day, the only elected official I know of that joined a RESULTS group while still in office.

During that year, A.J. had an op-ed published in the Dayton Daily News called ‘I Am a Welfare Success Story.’ In it, he told the world of his financially impoverished youth. He would say that money was short but not the spirit of plenty and love he had experienced growing up. He said how welfare had helped him and his family survive. How good public schools helped him to be educated, allowed him to go to law school and become a successful person. He reminded us of the good work done by others before and during this time on the history of poverty. How in one person’s words that poverty was a common ancestor to us all. He told me he took a lot of flak from the public and other politicians for the op-ed. But in true A.J. form, he said he didn’t care. It was the right thing to do.

How many times can all of us hear him saying the same thing - it is the right thing to do.

A.J. and I would stay in touch in the years after I left Dayton in 1998.
With his death last month, perhaps it’s selfish for me to say, but I just wanted more time with A.J. Another decade or two, or at least another election cycle, or another month or week or day. Working and talking with him inspired me to do more, to go further, to try harder, to be better. You can’t replace that feeling. You can just try to embody it, every day.

Sam Daley-Harris, founder RESULTS and who was also a good friend of A.J.’s, shared this George Bernard Shaw quote with me many years ago. I think it captures what A.J. was all about:

“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it what I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live.”

For over 37 years, Nick Arena has worked for not-for-profits that work on health, economic and social justice issues. Currently, he works for a community bank in Washington DC and volunteers his time with several anti-hunger organizations and the local community radio station WPFW FM.
In response to Nick Arena’s “A.J. Wagner belonged to the whole community” on Sept. 13, Judge A.J. Wager was one of the truly great people that walked this earth. A.J. was a devout Christian and believed it his Christian duty to “Love thy neighbor.” Of course, A.J. understood that God loved all his children equally, not just those living in Dayton. That’s why he attended the RESULTS meeting with Nick Arena, and started the ButterflyPAC to alleviate, and even end, poverty globally and in the US. A.J. kept it going with his devotion, dollars and energy. I only knew A.J. for two years as the leader of the ButterflyPAC, but I greatly enjoyed his polite and caring manner that made everyone feel included and loved. You’ll be missed during our weekly meetings, my friend, and we’ll make sure to continue the great crusade you initiated.

– Pankaj Agarwal, San Francisco

America must lead the world in tuberculosis response

November 11, 2022

What if we had to worry about tuberculosis too? Entering the third autumn of the coronavirus pandemic, a fever, sore throat or sniffles that we used to call “just a cold” now bring a sense of dread. COVID-19? Seasonal flu? Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)? All highly infectious and, for some, causing severe symptoms and hospitalization. But in the U.S., we are fortunate that TB is not the scourge that it is elsewhere in the world. Until COVID passed it in 2020, TB was the leading infectious killer in the world, causing 1.4 million deaths in 2019 despite being a preventable and curable disease.

Decades of progress controlling TB was disrupted by the pandemic, with diagnostic tools and health care resources diverted to the COVID response. It is essential to get back on track before millions more lives are lost.

The U.S. is a leading funder of the global TB response, and funding must be invested in ways that are effective. The End Tuberculosis Now Act of 2021 directs our programs to emphasize quality diagnosis and treatment in highly at-risk and impoverished populations, training of health care workers, an aggressive research agenda to develop vaccines and support for accountability mechanisms.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman, R-Cincinnati, serves on the key committee in the Senate (Foreign Relations) and U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Cleveland, has been a champion on the Hill brining awareness to the devastating effects of TB. I call on them to co-sponsor this legislation and urge Senate leadership to pass this important legislation.

- Allison Gallaher, Grafton

No online link
Oklahoma media
Oregon media
Weeklies are What’s Happening

May 26, 2022

Happy 40th birthday year to Eugene Weekly! (“Vol. 1, No. 1,” 5/19). Weekly papers are America’s heart: local stories, celebrations and concerns, along with a forum for discussion. Whether it is local issues such as homelessness, national issues like tax fairness (i.e. the Child Tax Credit renewal) or global issues like the pandemic and support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, readers learn and discuss all in these pages. Not to mention elections, reproductive rights and climate degradation.

So happy birthday and thanks for all you do, from an appreciative out-of-town reader and conversation participant.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Washington

https://eugeneweekly.com/2022/05/26/weeklies-are-whats-happening/
Tuberculosis surging after COVID-19

November 22, 2022

COVID-19 consumed the focus and resources of infectious disease specialists, research scientists, and health care as a whole. Thanks to this huge effort, the devastating impact of COVID-19 has been minimized. Unfortunately, another infectious disease has risen in its place: tuberculosis.

During the time that COVID-19 was requiring significant resources, millions of people worldwide were not able to get the treatment they needed for tuberculosis. As a result, 1.6 million people died of the disease worldwide in 2021. It was the first time in many years that there was an increase in TB deaths.

Most TB cases are curable. However, the majority of those infected are in resource-poor areas where proper treatment is not available or hard to access. That is why action must be taken now and the End TB Now Act is necessary. This legislation sets bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations affected by TB. It catalyzes support for the research and development of new tools to prevent, diagnose, and treat TB, including drug-resistant strains, worldwide. Contact your local congresspersons and stress the urgency of supporting the act.

– Takoda Wheeler, Corvallis

Perhaps it is time to better ourselves

December 31, 2022

Richard Kyte’s discussion about living an ethically responsible life (“Effective altruism offers promise, pitfalls,” Dec. 7, online) reminds me of the people I volunteer with in RESULTS: “sincere, thoughtful and encouraging.”

All of this while working together to end hunger and poverty by working with our members of Congress to pass legislation that makes a difference in our country and our world. Like renewing the expanded Child Tax Credit that cut child poverty by 46% and helped families pay rent and bills and buy food.

Or working now to pass the End TB Now Act (S.3386/H.R.8654), which sets bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of tuberculosis. So perhaps it is time to work with others to better ourselves and our world at the same time, by taking action in our democracy.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Washington

https://democratherald.com/corvallis/opinion/letters/letter-perhaps-it-is-time-to-better-ourselves/article_64d939b4-7c18-11ed-aa72-7fdab8f27c6a.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

Also printed in:

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Pennsylvania media
The Philadelphia Inquirer

U.S. leadership is crucial for the global fund

March 18, 2022

The U.S. is back! Now we need to lead in global health. Poverty is a health risk – as we’ve seen by the terribly low rate of vaccination in the global south. Women suffer more: They are more likely to be impoverished and are expected to provide family care.

Global health resources were diverted to deal with COVID-19, naturally. As a result, we’ve seen major setbacks fighting against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

Over 20 years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 40%, and strengthened global health systems. To continue this vital work, make up for ground lost during the pandemic, and prepare for future health crises, the Global Fund needs at least $18 billion.

I urge President Joe Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his fiscal year 2023 budget request, and Congress to appropriate the same amount for FY 2023. It will send a signal to other nations that they must do their part at the pledging conference later this year. Global health impacts us all.

– Betsy Teutsch, Philadelphia

No online link
Commitment to global public health is right move

April 9, 2022

I applaud President Biden’s budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year (“Biden’s budget plan: Higher taxes on rich, lower deficits,” March 28, TribLIVE), particularly the president’s commitment to global public health initiatives.

One aspect of the federal budget that should not be overlooked is our nation's commitment to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and Biden made the right call by committing $2 billion to the Global Fund.

Over 20 years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 64% and strengthened health systems around the world.

Strengthening the Global Fund strengthens us. The Global Fund played an important role in responding to covid-19, and we need to have a continued robust response to the covid crisis.

I urge Congress and specifically my senators, Bob Casey and Pat Toomey, and the Pennsylvania congressional delegation to deliver on the $2 billion Biden included in his FY23 budget request. It will send a signal to other nations that they must do their part at the pledging conference later this year.

Ben Callaway, Lawrenceville

https://triblive.com/opinion/letter-to-the-editor-commitment-to-global-public-health-is-right-move/
Work together to treat killer diseases

April 24, 2022

All readers of The Sentinel have gotten used to reading informative coverage on health issues, but not this one: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, one of the world’s greatest aid successes. Wealthy countries support a fund that saves lives with drugs and creates systems to deliver them in countries that would otherwise be completely at the mercy of these three treatable diseases. Recipient countries share the cost and build health care systems that fit their particular circumstances. In the last 20 years the fund has saved 44 million lives by cutting the death rate from these diseases in half.

However, two and a half years of the COVID pandemic disrupted diagnosis and treatment of AIDS, TB and malaria, causing more death and suffering. Progress has in fact been reversed in over a hundred countries.

Every three years rich countries like ours commit their ongoing support for the fund. President Biden has pledged the U.S. to contribute $2 billion a year, which will encourage other donors to pledge another $4 billion a year. While he has made the request, it is up to Congress to put it in the budget.

Here’s a type of policy which ought to attract wide support in Congress. It will, if members like John Joyce (who represents the 13th District, including Newville) and Scott Perry (who represents the 10th District, including Carlisle) hear from constituents. If you think saving millions of lives makes good policy for our country, tell them. You can call Rep. Joyce at 202-225-2431; Rep. Perry at 202-225-5836.

– Bruce Kessler, Newville

Perfect storm

July 24, 2022

While we plan picnics, the world is experiencing a perfect storm – pandemic, Ukraine’s harvests obliterated, and global inflation jacking up food prices. Millions of parents can’t feed their kids. In 2020, 150 million children were stunted (too short), and 45 million were wasting (too thin), lacking enough calories for growth and development.

Less than 1% of global development dollars goes toward nutrition. The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (SB 2956) help USAID maximize high-impact, proven, affordable interventions like prenatal vitamins, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplementation, and therapeutic food to treat starving children.

The U.S. must provide leadership on this urgent need. Time is of the essence. We call on Sens. Pat Toomey and Bob Casey to step up, bring the bill to the Senate floor, and pass SB 2956.

– Betsy Teutsch, Philadelphia

No online line
Hungry children are caught in a perfect storm

August 5, 2022

The world is experiencing a perfect storm — pandemic, war in Ukraine destroying harvests and global inflation jacking up food prices — that's left millions of parents unable to feed their children.

In 2020, nearly 150 million children under 5 were stunted (too short), and over 45 million were wasting (too thin ) due to inadequate calories and nutrients for growing and developing.

We know how to help, but less than 1% of total global development dollars go toward nutrition.

The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (S. 2956) has passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is great news. This better positions USAID to maximize its resources for high-impact, proven, and affordable interventions, including prenatal vitamins, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplementation for young kids, and emergency therapeutic foods to treat life-threatening severe malnutrition.

The U.S. must provide leadership on this urgent need in the world. Time is of the essence. We call on Senators Pat Toomey and Bob Casey to step up, and bring the bill to the floor and vote to pass S. 2956.

– Betsy Teutsch, chapter leader, Together Women Rise/Results Philadelphia


Reprinted in:
The Times

https://www.timesonline.com/story/opinion/columns/2022/08/05/letter-hungry-children-are-caught-in-a-perfect-storm/65390974007/
Rhode Island media
South Carolina media
South Dakota media
Tennessee media
US must support global vaccine efforts

January 5, 2022

In 'Moderna morally obligated to do more in COVID fight,' guest columnist Joe Ingle details the COVID vaccine disparity created by vaccine manufacturers' greed. The Biden administration is pressuring Moderna, yet it still focuses sales on wealthier nations.

Meanwhile, less than 10% of people in Africa are fully vaccinated and many low-income countries are imposing new lockdowns due to the delta and omicron variants.

Fortunately, Dr. Peter Hotez, Dr. Maria Elena Bottazzi, Texas Children's Hospital's Center for Vaccine Development and the Baylor College of Medicine are sharing technology for manufacturing their Corbevax vaccine, dubbed 'The World's COVID-19 Vaccine.' They hope the vaccine, proven effective in tests, will achieve low-cost scalability across the world.

Largely due to global vaccine inequity, variants continue to develop. This threatens health and economic stability globally, including in the United States. Whether with the Moderna, Corbevax or other vaccines, we are all morally obligated to do more in the global COVID fight. Congress should support more global efforts. Otherwise, COVID will mutate, infect, spread and kill ... repeatedly.

– Anne Child, Oak Ridge

No online link
Honor late congressman’s fight against infectious diseases

March 23, 2022

I offer a salute to U.S. Rep. Don Young, a Republican from Alaska, who passed away on March 18. Young led the fight against tuberculosis. In November he and Rep. Ami Bera, a Democrat from California, introduced the Comprehensive TB Elimination Act. Did you realize that before COVID-19, tuberculosis was the No. 1 killer among infectious diseases in the world and that TB deaths increased in 2020 for the first time in a decade, up to 1.5 million lives lost?

He urged the U.S. to robustly fund the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The fight against these diseases has faltered since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The U.S. is hosting the Global Fund's pledging conference this year. The U.S. must pledge $2 billion per year to inspire the world to invest $18 billion to end all four pandemics. Young would want us to finish his mission.

– Anne Child, Oak Ridge

No online link
Need to pass bill to stop Global Malnutrition

July 22, 2022

To the Editor:

The Oak Ridger’s July 8, 2022 article “UN: 2.3 billion people hungry in 2021” reports that hunger is on the rise as climate change threatens crops and COVID disrupts supply chains. Now in 2022, the war in Ukraine promises more empty bellies.

The subtitle says the “Report urges action to address growing problem.” Fortunately, the U.S. House passed H.R.4693, the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act. Thank you, Representative (Chuck) Fleischmann, for voting Yea.

The bill directs the U.S. Agency for International Development to prioritize increasing coverage of high-impact and scientifically proven nutrition treatments for the vulnerable populations that need them most. These treatments include the Power Four for the first 1,000 days of life, pregnancy to second birthday: prenatal vitamins, support of breastfeeding, two high doses of Vitamin A every year, and use of energy-dense ready-to-use therapeutic foods to treat wasting. The bill calls for coordination across agencies, organizations and governments. Our foreign aid funds will be more effective.

Now it’s up to our Senators. The companion Senate bill S. 2956 needs to gain momentum. Senators Marsha Blackburn and Bill Hagerty could join the fifteen Senators sponsoring this bill. If they believe in saving mother’s and children’s lives, this is a powerful, non-partisan action that will do just that.

— Anne Child, Oak Ridge

No online link
Legislators should support End TB Now Act

November 20, 2022
Legislators should support End TB Now Act

November 20, 2022

COVID-19, the flu, RSV ... oh my! But there’s another airborne infectious disease: tuberculosis. According to a recent news item, the World Health Organization has reported a 90% rip in COVID-19 deaths since February," with 1.340 people dying daily worldwide from the disease. Also, according to a new WHO report, 4.380 die daily from tuberculosis. TB deaths have increased since the pandemic began because resources were diverted from TB to address the pandemic.

Fortunately, Congress is considering the End TB Now Act, which would hold the U.S. government accountable to set goals to detect, cure and prevent all forms of TB, including drug-resistant strains. By coordinating with other governments and organizations, it would make our tax dollars more efficient and put the world back on track toward eliminating this ancient disease. Let’s urge recently elected Rep. Tim Burchett and Chuck Fleischmann, as well as Sens. Marsha Blackburn and Bill Hagerty, to co-sponsor and pass the End TB Now Act this year. Save lives, save money.

– Anne Child, Oak Ridge

No online link

Reprinted in the Knoxville News-Sentinel again on November 27 and December (no online links)
Texas media
Life-saving discoveries

January 5, 2022

Regarding “Editorial: Houston-made Corbevax vaccine welcome news in pandemic,” (Dec. 31): Kudos for your editorial that says it all about Dr. Maria Elena Bottazzi and Dr. Peter Hotez and their team at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital who have produced a much needed “gift from Texas to the world.”

The team has developed an inexpensive yet effective vaccine that can provide the billions of doses that will be needed to vaccinate the 6 billion people in low- and middle-income countries, and finally end the COVID pandemic.

The two doctors and their team have done their part to end the pandemic without any financial benefit to themselves. It is now time for the rest of us to take action. Our country must do more to expand vaccine manufacturing and access. It is the right thing to do, and also in our own best interest. If we fail to provide vaccines to people living in low-income countries, we hurt our own prospects of getting rid of COVID-19 in the process. Call or write President Joe Biden and our members of Congress and urge them to follow our Texas example and show strong leadership in vaccine equity to bring an to end this pandemic.

– Claudia Morgan, Houston

https://www.houstonchronicle.com/opinion/letters/article/Opinion-Texas-Medical-Center-build-clinics-for-16749803.php
Support bill to end malnutrition

January 30, 2022

As Texans, feeding people is one of the things we do best, and we know that food feeds more than just our bodies. With our abundance of food, it is almost unfathomable that even before COVID-19, child malnutrition was the underlying cause of almost half of preventable deaths of children younger than 5. Those numbers are now worse.

Proper nutrition is so important in preventing child deaths, especially during the period from pregnancy to age 2. The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act would provide nutritional help where it is needed most and would make the U.S. a leader in ending severe childhood malnutrition. Ask your members of Congress to join their colleagues on both sides of the fence in co-sponsoring this bill.

– Laura E. Blenk, Rockwall

https://edition.pagesuite.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=2c396c1a-b944-4a49-b30c-9425ead66f65
Fight the rise in TB deaths

March 24, 2022

World Tuberculosis Day is today, March 24. It marks the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes tuberculosis. This year it will be an especially sad day. For the first time in decades, the number of TB deaths has increased. TB is an epidemic in many poor countries, but because we have mostly eliminated it here, it is not on our radar. Yet, it kills 1.5 million a year worldwide.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has saved more than 44 million lives over the last 20 years. The Global Fund built health systems around the world that are being used to fight COVID-19 and those three infectious diseases of poverty. The Global Fund has a three-year plan to save 20 million lives, cut the death rate from HIV, TB and malaria by 64%, and strengthen systems for health to build a healthier, more equitable world.

The United States has been the leader in supporting the work of the Global Fund by contributing a third of the funding required. Please contact your member of Congress and your senators and request $2 billion for the Global Fund in the 2023 budget.

– Margaret Smith, Dallas/Turtle Creek

https://edition.pagesuite.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=a6fafa82-91d7-4c34-a731-d49ba9e4bf74
Tell Congress to back a U.S. pledge to fully replenish the Global Fund

March 25, 2022

Re: March 14 commentary, "In war, kindness is as important as missiles."

Did you miss Michael Gerson's powerful column about what is really important?

Faced with war and death, Gerson reminds us that our acts of justice and kindness outlive us, reflecting on how "global health was worth every hour, every minute" he devoted to it. World leaders will soon gather to replenish the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, an enormous act of kindness. Like Ukraine, the world has been battered, not by war, but by the pandemic, devastating the fight against these deadly diseases.

A strong Global Fund can restore momentum, fight Covid, and prepare for future pandemics. The U.S. must take the lead and ensure it is fully funded. Tell your members of Congress to push leadership and the administration to support a robust U.S. pledge to replenish the Global Fund in 2022. That could be your true act of kindness.

– Mark Coats, Austin

Continue bipartisan support for Global Fund to fight diseases

April 2, 2022

Re: March 28 article, "US-backed group gets medicine to Ukrainians."

Great to learn that tuberculosis and AIDS medications are being delivered to patients despite the war.

Across the world, as resources were diverted to deal with COVID-19, we've seen setbacks in fighting against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. While it was necessary for the diagnostic equipment and laboratories that were in place to take on COVID-19 immediately, we must get back on track with these other diseases, continue fighting COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics. With a 20-year record of saving 44 million lives, reducing the death rate from these diseases by 46%, and strengthening health systems, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is well positioned to get all this accomplished.

Congress must continue its bipartisan support by appropriating $2 billion in fiscal year 2023 for the Global Fund. I call on all our members of Congress from Texas to speak up with strong support for the Global Fund.

– Eloise Sutherland, Austin

https://www.statesman.com/story/opinion/letters/2022/04/02/austin-american-statesman-letters-editor-april-2-2022/7191242001/
Global vaccine

April 11, 2022

Regarding “Editorial: Congress shouldn’t shrug off responsibility to vaccinate the world,” (April 5): With another wave of COVID-19 infections threatening to head our way just as we were beginning to breathe a sigh of relief, I find the Senate’s decision to cut funding for the COVID-19 global vaccination effort to be short-sighted.

COVID-19 doesn’t recognize national boundaries, and to be truly safe in our home country, the U.S. must step up to ensure that COVID-19 is controlled in every nation.

Billions of people remain unvaccinated. Assuring wide distribution of affordable and effective vaccines such as Corbevax, developed by the team at Texas Children's Hospital led by Dr. Peter Hotez and Dr. Maria Elena Bottazzi, can save millions of lives.

As Dr. Hotez reminds us, big projects like vaccinating the world only get done when the U.S. takes the lead. We must fight COVID-19 everywhere in order to win the fight at home once and for all. This pandemic is truly a case where we can and must help ourselves by helping others.

– Claudia Morgan, Houston

Foreign aid

April 22, 2022

Regarding “New life for extra vaccines from U.S.,” (April 18): The Chronicle republished a heartwarming story about a father and son, Dr. Victor Treviño, the Laredo Health Authority, and Victor Treviño Jr., collecting unused COVID vaccines in America and administering them in Nuevo Laredo. Mexican vaccine recipients take buses to the international bridge between the two cities. Health workers board the buses and administer the shots. This raises the vaccinated rate in Nuevo Laredo, a city of nearly half a million people, while also protecting people in Laredo.

But on April 19, the vaccine story in the Chronicle was grim: “Calls renewed to pass pandemic funding.” To appease Republicans’ spending concerns, $5 billion for global vaccination was removed from Congress’ proposed pandemic aid package. Worldwide, the percentage of vaccinated people in wealthy countries is high, around 80 percent. In poor countries, it’s alarmingly low, an estimated 16 percent.

Have we forgotten the dangerous variants that arose in unvaccinated people? Getting vaccines into as many arms as possible, worldwide, keeps us all safer. On average, 37,000 new cases are being identified daily here. Americans are still dying. When we protect others, we’re protecting ourselves as well.

– Nancy Perich Daly, Houston

Make children foreign aid priority

May 15, 2022

Re: “Mothers drive democracy movements — Around world, women are demanding rights, freedoms for their communities,” by Natalie Gonnella-Platts, May 6 Opinion.

Many thanks to Gonnella-Platts for forcefully reminding all of us of the enormous role mothers play as “a threat to tyrants and rogue actors all over the world.” Even here at home, where many of these actors are less obvious, and hopefully less evil, mothers are “catalysts for accountability, equity and security.”

Congress is currently preparing appropriations for fiscal year 2023, and one of their choices is whether to adequately fund in the foreign aid budget $300 million for high protein food delivered to pregnant women and their newborns for the first 1,000 days of life of the infant in order to prevent early childhood deaths and the long-term effects of wasting and stunting in young children.

Preventing maternal and childhood malnutrition worldwide could save 5 million needless child deaths annually. Please urge your senators and representatives to tell the appropriators on the House and Senate foreign operations committees to include this amount in the 2023 budget. Mothers and infants need it and want it for their children to live and to live a better life.

– Martin G. White, Dallas/Turtle Creek

It's back-to-school time for children around the world. Yet 616 million students globally won't be attending due to school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely disrupted children's access to quality education.

The READ Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 bill would enable the U.S. to continue to lead on global equity for both boys and girls to have access to education. The longer vulnerable children are out of school, the less likely they are to return, and the World Bank estimates that this generation of students will lose $17 trillion in lifetime earnings.

The U.S. has long been a leader in supporting developing countries as they work to educate their children. This bipartisan legislation would strengthen the effectiveness, impact and accountability of this work, helping to ensure that children and youth have access to a quality education, regardless of where they were born.

I am asking our members of Congress to cosponsor the READ Act Reauthorization Act of 2022, so we can continue this important work for millions of students worldwide.

– Marie Tilden, North Dallas

While global cooperation has led to unprecedented scientific breakthroughs in the fight against COVID-19, other high-burden diseases remain endemic and suffer exacerbated effects from the pandemic. COVID-19 has caused delays in HIV and tuberculosis testing, which impedes the initiation of treatment, thus increasing the risks of additional outbreaks and drug resistance.

However, leveraging the advances made throughout the COVID-19 pandemic could help in the fight against HIV through the development of novel mRNA vaccines. Testing facilities can also be repurposed to tackle the TB epidemic in low-income countries.

The U.S. must take the lead to ensure that The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria obtains the appropriate funding. This will provide low-income countries with the tools necessary to bring an end to infectious diseases that cause over 5 million deaths each year.

I wish to thank Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Dallas, and her team for their continued support of global health initiatives. I hope that our Texas representatives will continue to work with global health organizations to reduce the burden of diseases worldwide.

– Amelie Jacobs, Far North Dallas

Stop TB spread

December 16, 2022

Re: “Tuberculosis case linked to 3 high schools,” Metro, Saturday:

Returning once again to San Antonio to visit my sister, I was sorry to read about the recent tuberculosis case connected to three high schools. This happened where I am from, Snohomish County, Wash., in a high school choir. We think of TB mostly in other countries, but it definitely shows up in America every year. Historically, TB is one of the most deadly infectious diseases and is on the rise again after much of the world’s resources to battle it were shifted to COVID.

Congress is working to pass the End Tuberculosis Now Act, S.3386/H.R.8654, directing the U.S. Agency for International Development to set bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of tuberculosis. So help protect us locally by supporting this action globally to battle TB by asking your members of Congress to help pass this critical legislation.

– Willie Dickerson

Go all in to stop TB

December 31, 2022


Yes, let’s go “all in” on the future of Africa! President Joe Biden’s comments recognize the importance of health for the continent. Fighting tuberculosis must be at the top of the list.

The deadly tuberculosis epidemic takes more lives than HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. More than half of the high TB burden countries are in Africa.

The End TB Now Act has the potential to start reversing an alarming backslide in the fight against tuberculosis that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. TB cases and deaths are on the rise rather than decline for the first time in years. Passing the End TB Now Act will hold USAID accountable for doing its part to scale up quality diagnosis, treatment and prevention for this leading infectious disease killer. It also expands social and medical support systems for those marginalized by poverty who face the biggest risks from TB.

Just last week, Congress passed the End TB Now Act (S. 3386/H.R. 8654) out of its key committees, and it is eligible to come to a vote in the full House and Senate. Please urge Sens. John Cornyn and Ted Cruz and your own representative to push for a vote this year.

– Margaret Smith, Dallas/Turtle Creek

https://reader.dallasnews.com/infinity/article_popover_share.aspx?guid=2aae71d1-19a1-41be-ad21-29e0641f3e6a
Utah media
Support this global vaccine initiative

The Global Fund is responsible for saving 44 million lives in its partnership with low and middle income countries over the last 20 years

March 4, 2022

Thanks for your thoughtful editorial about the lessons from the pandemic. (“When the history of the pandemic is written, what will be the biggest lesson?” by the Deseret News Editorial Board, Feb. 23, 2022.)

While it may indeed be 100 years before the next one, likely we are still threatened by new variants and future pandemics that may not wait. Fortunately the president is taking steps to support one of the most proven initiatives in global health by holding the replenishment conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria later this year.

The Global Fund is responsible for saving 44 million lives in its partnership with low and middle income countries over the last 20 years. The Global Fund also strengthens health care systems and has worked with these countries during the last two years to battle COVID-19. Congress agrees, with nearly 140 members calling on the president to make a bold pledge to the Global Fund. Now is a great time to encourage your members of Congress to make sure this becomes a reality, resulting in health care systems that can more successfully battle what comes next.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, WA

Congress has an opportunity to combat newly resurgent tuberculosis

November 30, 2022

Our congressmen and senators have taken an oath to support and defend our country “against all enemies, foreign and domestic.” Those enemies include more than just domestic terrorists and foreign autocrats, they also include infectious disease killers.

We are still in an ongoing fight for survival against the COVID virus, which has so far killed more than a million Americans. Every year we lose another 30,000-50,000 of our citizens to influenza. The Respiratory Syncytial Virus threatens our youngest children, and this week is straining the capacities of our children's hospitals. Even polio, thought to be fully contained, is now making a comeback. None of these infectious pathogens is strictly domestic. All are spread easily across our entire world, and thus we must fight them in every country, not just when they reach our borders.

Tuberculosis (TB) has been a scourge on humans for at least 9,000 years. Until COVID, TB was the single greatest infectious disease killer. This disease is increasing, and last year caused 1.6 million deaths.

Congress, in the next six weeks, has an opportunity to do something about TB, while also building up the global ability to recognize, diagnose, and treat infectious diseases in general. The End TB Now Act is being considered in both the House (H.R. 8654) and in the Senate (S. 3386). This bill does not require any additional funding, just directs the U.S. Agency for International Development to focus its resources, build international partnerships, share expertise, and help countries improve their own medical systems to combat infectious diseases.

I ask you to take two minutes and call the offices of Sen. Romney (202-224-5251), Sen. Lee (202-224-5444), and your Congressman (Blake Moore 202-225-0453, Chris
Stewart 202-225-9730, John Curtis 202-225-7751, Burgess Owens 202-225-3011). They work for you. Remind them of their oath to defend, and ask them to support this bill.

– William E. Cosgrove, Cottonwood Heights

https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/letters/2022/11/30/letter-congress-has-an/
Vermont media
Money needed to save millions of lives from AIDS, TB and malaria

March 30, 2022

It would be easy in a tiny state like Vermont to isolate and to care only about issues that directly relate to us, but time and again I am surprised by how Vermonters show that they do care about world issues.

Across the state, Vermonters are finding ways to support Ukraine through donating supplies and money to NGOs and waiving the Ukrainian flag, welcoming refugees from Africa, Europe and Asia with open arms, and voting for humanitarian aid to be sent overseas.

We observed World Tuberculosis Day on March 24, and I hope my fellow Vermonters will continue to be the action-taking advocates I am proud to know by supporting a cause that could save 20 million lives over three years.

When Covid hit, people and resources on the front lines of other pandemics were pulled in to help fight Covid, resulting in backward motion on progress toward saving people from TB, AIDS and malaria for the first time in a decade.

Over years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 64 percent, and strengthened health systems around the world. To continue this vital work, make up for ground lost during the pandemic, and prepare for future health crises, the Global Fund needs at least $18 billion over the next three years.

I am a local Vermonter traveling to Washington, D.C., in April to ask our members of Congress to urge President Biden at the upcoming pledging summit for the Global Fund to contribute a full third of the $18 billion needed to prevent any more devastating impact on the fight against tuberculosis, AIDS and malaria.
My fellow Vermonters can help by writing to Sens. Sanders and Leahy, asking each of them to continue the legacy of supporting the Global Fund by urging the president to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his fiscal year 2023 budget request and urging Congress to appropriate the same amount for fiscal 2023.

Thank you, Vermont, for always raising your signs, flags and voices. The replenishment conference is this fall. I beg you to raise your voice on this issue too so that Sens. Leahy and Sanders will know how much Vermonters care about saving millions of lives from AIDS, TB and malaria.

This commentary is by Felicia Bonanno, a homesteader in Essex Junction. She volunteers for a national organization called RESULTS, which works to influence policies that help to end poverty at home and abroad.

Covid isn’t the only pandemic affecting people

September 22 2022

It’s easy to forget these days that Covid is not the only contagion ravaging the globe. Second to Covid, communities and families around the world are also still plagued daily by tuberculosis, which has killed and negatively affected people for generations. This is despite the fact that TB is preventable, treatable and curable.

TB is an air-borne disease, just like Covid, so resources and expertise have been reallocated from addressing TB to focus on Covid-19 since the start of the new pandemic, rocketing us backward on the progress we have made on TB over the decades.

TB is a disease of people living in poverty. It exploits and exacerbates poverty and disproportionately hurts the marginalized. Frankly, this is why it so easily falls to the wayside.

But this does not need to continue. We do not need to continue trading off work to fight TB in order to fight Covid. We can do both.

The End TB Now Act (S.3386/H.R.8654) are bipartisan bills directing the United States Agency for International Development to set bold targets to reach and treat the most vulnerable populations for all forms of TB. We have a unique opportunity to set TB control and eradication goals back on track.

This is your chance to take action to ensure those suffering from TB are not forgotten in the wake of Covid. Please call or email Sen. Bernie Sanders, Sen. Patrick Leahy, and Rep. Peter Welch and ask them to co-sponsor the End TB Now Act and support its passage this year. Congress must act if we are to save more lives and resume progress on addressing TB as a disease of poverty.

– Felicia Bonanno, Essex Junction
https://vtdigger.org/letters_to_editor/covid-isnt-the-only-pandemic-affecting-people/
Virginia media
Washington media
Get to know Congress by participating and communicating

January 10, 2022


Call, write, or attend one of his many public (now Zoom) meetings, and ask him. He is a straight-forward thoughtful person who takes time to listen, consider, and answer. He appreciates hearing from constituents. His support of local and global health issues like COVID relief, the Child Tax Credit, have brought relief in our country, lifting 3.6 million children out of poverty and saving countless suffering. His global support of nutrition, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, along with education, have helped save millions around the world, improving America's standing in the process.

So if you are curious about an issue, give him a call, he will respond.

- Willie Dickerson, Snohomish

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/01/10/get-know-congress-participating-and-communicating/9160580002/
Spending on worldwide vaccinations efforts helps end pandemic

January 26, 2022

Last month a sign on letter requesting $17 billion for supplemental funding to end the global pandemic was signed by 81 members of Congress. We are encouraged by this bipartisan support and thank Washington Representative signers Adam Smith, Kim Schrier, and Pramila Jayapal. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, Rep. Kilmer was unable to sign but expressed support. This letter stated "Focusing exclusively on domestic testing, vaccines, and boosters, is insufficient to protect us from the virus."

We are far off to reach the goal, set by the United Nations, of vaccinating 70% of the world. The pandemic has had a devastating effect on every aspect of global health. The total cost is estimated at $63 billion.

CARE states that $40 billion of this amount will go toward maintaining the stringent storage and delivery protocols ensuring that the vaccines remain effective especially in hard to reach rural areas. Low-income countries can afford $20 billion of that amount. Another 20 billion will have to come from donor countries. The Access To COVID-19 Tools Accelerator calculates we will need an additional $23 billion for vaccines, diagnostics, treatments, and to support health systems. Thus wealthy countries will have to provide $43 billion to meet these goals. A fair share amount for the U.S. based on the size of our GDP would be $17 billion.

No investment in the fight against COVID-19 is more urgent, and cost effect, than an investment in getting the world vaccinated as quickly as possible.

– Leslie and Michael Boyer, Bremerton

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/01/26/spending-worldwide-vaccinations-efforts-helps-end-pandemic/9229094002/
Ensuring access to vaccines makes us all safer

January 27, 2022

As our hospitals fill again with the unvaccinated, the omicron variant has proven once again that the only way out of COVID-19 is to ensure that everyone has access to vaccines.

Anyone in the U.S. who wants to be, can, but that is not the case for people living in other countries. Five and a half million people have died of COVID-19 globally. With U.S. leadership, the world has set a global goal of vaccinating 70% of the population by September 2022. This would save lives, slow the incubation of variants, and allow economies to recover. However, it requires funding to get the job done. The cost of reaching the goal is $63 billion. The U.S. fair share would be $17 billion. The President must request the $17 billion in vaccine supplemental and Congress should include it in the final fiscal year 2022 spending bill.

The only way out of COVID is leadership. We're counting on President Biden and Congress.

– Judy Arbogast, Olalla

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/01/27/ensuring-access-vaccines-makes-us-all-safer/9244089002/
Kilmer has been an ally in fight against poverty

March 8, 2022

I write to make sure Rep. Derek Kilmer’s constituents know what a great heart and understanding he has. Every three years the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria holds a pledging conference where the leading nations of the world make their pledges for the coming three years. Since it was founded 28 years ago, the Global Fund has saved 44 million lives.

When Covid hit, the medical infrastructure that the Global Fund had established in resource-poor countries was instrumental in supporting the prevention and treatment measures that countries needed. The world would be far worse off without that Global Fund provided infrastructure to help address the Coronavirus.

In September the U.S. will host the Global Fund pledging conference. If it is fully funded by the donor nations, it predicts it will save another 20 million lives in the next three years. When we asked Rep. Kilmer to sign onto a letter from the U.S. House of Representatives to the Biden Administration in support of a strong U.S. pledge, Rep. Kimler signed immediately.

It is gratifying to know that our Representative has a heart for those who are struggling, for creating healthy and secure communities and nations, and for ending poverty. Thank you, Rep. Kilmer!

– Beth Wilson, Olalla

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/03/08/kilmer-has-been-ally-fight-against-poverty/9427686002/
Global Health Funding

Thank you for funding health initiatives

March 9, 2022

To the Editor:

As the pandemic seemingly winds down and we look forward to masks coming off, I would like to thank Reps. Larsen and DelBene for their work to end this pandemic and prevent the same kind of off guard experience in the future. Their work includes supporting local health districts, governments, and relief for all in the form of legislation passed by Congress, including the Child Tax Credit that benefitted 90% of American families. They both voted to extend this ladder out of poverty by passing the recent Build Back Better Act, which sadly stalled in the Senate. And for the future? Both signed a letter to President Biden calling for a bold pledge to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. The Global Fund has a proven track record: working with middle and low income countries to save 44 million lives in the last 20 years. During the pandemic, the Global Fund has been on the front line with these same countries. In all of this work, the Global Fund is strengthening local health care systems that are critical to battling pandemics, old and new. Without continued efforts of partner countries and the Global Fund, variants will continue to come back, threatening us locally. No wonder President Biden will host the replenishment conference for the Global Fund later this year in America. So thanks for all the hard work, Reps. Larsen and DelBene, know you will continue to your much appreciated efforts to create a better and safer state, country, and world.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish

Helping others can help your well-being

March 9, 2022

Thanks for the great reminder of the power we have to manage our own stress with self care, all in a less than two-minute video. (‘How self care can help you manage stress’ in Latest Video section of The Daily News, Feb. 23, 2022)

While our current stress level is exacerbated by the pandemic, divisive politics and the Ukraine war, we can do something: take action. Living in a democracy, we can talk to those who represent us. For example: Thank Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler for recently supporting a global nutrition initiative that will create a healthier world for children and ask her to also support bold funding in America's upcoming pledge for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Global Fund has spent the last 20 years partnering with low- and middle-income countries to strengthen health-care systems, save lives and even battle COVID. Taking action helps strengthen our democracy, relieves personal stress, and can help create a better world for all.

– Willie Dickerson

A global effort to prepare for future health crises

March 15, 2022

Over the past two years we've seen major setbacks in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria as resources were diverted to deal with COVID-19. It is imperative we get back on track with these three diseases, continue fighting COVID-19, and prepare for future pandemics. Supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and malaria is the way to do that.

Over 20 years, the Global Fund partnership has saved 44 million lives, reduced the death rate from these diseases by 64 percent, and strengthened health systems around the world. To continue this vital work, make up for ground lost during the pandemic, and prepare for future health crises, the Global Fund needs at least $18 billion over the next three years.

The Global Fund has always had bipartisan support in Congress and the U.S. has consistently led replenishment efforts by committing at least one-third of the resources needed. The Administration and Congress should show that leadership again when the U.S. hosts the Global Fund replenishment conference later this year.

I urge President Biden to include the first U.S. installment of $2 billion in his FY23 budget request and Congress to appropriate the same amount for FY23. It will send a signal to other nations that they must do their part at the pledging conference later this year.

– Michael Boyer, Bremerton

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/03/15/global-effort-prepare-future-health-crises/7050836001/
U.S. must provide funding for global epidemic efforts

March 21, 2022

Over the past two years we've seen major setbacks in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria as resources were diverted to deal with covid-19. It is imperative we get back on track with these three diseases, continue fighting covid-19, and prepare for future pandemics. Supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria is the way to do that.

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https://www.heraldnet.com/opinion/u-s-must-provide-funding-for-global-epidemic-efforts/
Power of people

Appreciation that DelBene has ear to global health needs

April 20, 2022

To the Editor:

Meeting with Rep. Suzan DelBene recently on Zoom reminded me of the power citizens have to speak to those who govern us.

Congresswoman DelBene and I have been meeting since she was elected 10 years ago, working together on issues of hunger, poverty, housing, global health, and the oppression that surrounds these issues. This time we were talking about the new pandemic and the ones that still kill at least 2 million people a year: AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. I am grateful the President pledged $2 billion a year for the next three years to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, with the Congresswoman’s full support. With any disease only a plane flight away, the Global Fund’s work with middle and low income countries strengthens their health care systems, which in turn protects us locally. We also spoke of her work to renew the Child Tax Credit and creating more affordable housing. A champion of the Child Tax Credit, she was instrumental in it being included in the early COVID relief package. This tax fairness initiative lifted 3.7 million children out of poverty and helps families to afford both food and rent. Her efforts to renew this ladder out of poverty continue, and even include lobbying in the Senate to make sure families once again have this relief. So thanks for listening and all of your hard work to benefit families, Congresswoman, your efforts and willingness to listen to constituents are appreciated.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish

Rep. Rick Larsen a leader many issues besides World Cup bid

July 18, 2022


The congressman lends his considerable efforts to many critical initiatives: affordable housing, renewing the Child Tax Credit, the support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, along with legislation to battle climate change and more. And in transportation matters like the recently passed infrastructure bill, Larsen played a key role, being a senior part of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Why not take a moment to drop a note of thanks for his effective work? Thanks, Rep. Larsen, keep working for what matters to families!

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish

U.S. needs to be a global leader on children's nutrition

August 5, 2022

In 2020, nearly 150 million children under five were stunted (too short for their age) and over 45 million were affected by wasting (too thin for their height). These forms of severe malnutrition indicate that a child has not received adequate calories and nutrients to grow and develop to their full potential.

We know how to help, but less than one percent of total global official development assistance goes toward nutrition. Now, the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine, and global food price crisis have only made the state of global nutrition more perilous.

The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act, S.2956, better positions USAID, our country's main international development agency, to maximize its resources for high impact, proven, and affordable interventions. These include providing prenatal vitamins, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplementation for young kids, and emergency therapeutic foods to treat life-threatening severe malnutrition. The House version of this bill has been passed and has moved through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Now it must be brought to the floor for a Senate vote.

I call on Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell to speak to Senate leadership, urging them to bring this bill to a vote immediately.

The U.S. must provide leadership on global malnutrition. Time is of the essence.

Beth Wilson, Olalla

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/08/05/u-s-needs-global-leader-childrens-nutrition/10250178002/
Nutrition program can protect millions of lives

August 12, 2022

The U.S. must provide leadership on global malnutrition. Time is of the essence.

After steadily declining for a decade, global hunger is on the rise. Malnutrition is the leading risk factor for deaths among children globally, accounting for 45% of all child deaths—losses that are almost entirely preventable.

The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 calls for a coordinated strategy for USAID nutrition assistance and sets clear targets for reaching the most impoverished children and families with effective interventions. The House version of this bill has been passed. The Senate version of the bill has moved through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This bill is at its final stage of becoming law. All that remains is passage by the full Senate and signing by the President.

Therefore, please call Sen. Patty Murray (202-224-2621) and Sen. Maria Cantwell and urge them to support this bill (S. 2956) to protect the lives of millions through good nutrition programs and policy.

– Michael and Leslie Boyer, Bremerton

https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/opinion/readers/2022/08/12/nutrition-program-can-protect-millions-lives/10311756002/
End TB Globally

November 23, 2022

There are a lot of divisive issues that dominate our national politics. However, there is a vital global issue that has bipartisan support: End Tuberculosis Now Act (SB 3386).

Until COVID came along, tuberculosis was the most infectious killer. Decades of progress controlling TB was disrupted by the pandemic. It is essential to get back on track before millions more lives are lost.

The bill mandates targeted allocation of existing TB treatment and prevention resources.

Thank you to Rep. Derek Kilmer for signing onto the House version (H.R. 8654). We ask you to contact Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and request they sign on to this life saving bill.

– Leslie and Michael Boyer, Bremerton

https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/readers-seek-reset/
West Virginia media
Prepare for the future by strengthening health care

February 24, 2022

Grateful to see such a positive headline about Covid. ("Positive test rate stays in single digits as Covid in full retreat" by J. Damon Cain, The Register-Herald, February 18). The article follows with the reality of current cases, hospitalizations, and the deaths of 16 West Virginians in the last 24 hours.

As the pandemic recedes, we need to learn the lessons of how to do better. One lesson the variants have taught us is to battle pandemics globally to protect us locally. President Biden is taking a major step toward this by holding the funding conference for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria in America this year. The Global Fund has a proven track record of saving lives (44 million) in the last 20 years and for the last two years helping countries battle Covid, while strengthening local health care systems. Congress agrees, with 129 members already signing a letter calling on the president to make a bold pledge to the Global Fund. Such a pledge will inspire other donors and help us be better prepared in the future to beat what comes next.

So let’s take heart and mourn our losses while preparing for the future by making sure Congress funds this critical initiative.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, WA

Continue the fight against pandemics

March 29, 2022

As Covid detection shifts to a new phase, so does uncertainty. ("Experts worry about how U.S. will see next Covid surge coming" by Mike Stobbe, The Register-Herald, March 25, 2022).

Continuing what works will help, but sadly Congress has not continued to fund the battle against the pandemic. Like the lack of renewal for the increased Child Tax Credit, which lifted 4 million children out of poverty, Congress easily forgets how important it is to fund initiatives that work.

Thanks to the president for hosting the Global Fund replenishment and 137 members of Congress for supporting a bold pledge to this life-saving organization that battles pandemics, including Covid, globally, protecting us locally. Thus Congress will have another opportunity to continue a proven initiative that works. We can help by reminding our members of Congress to fund these efforts that work to help families and protect us in this continuing pandemic.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, WA

Congress can act on climate change

May 6, 2022

Threats of new diseases caused by climate change are yet another reason to deal with climate change. ("Increased infectious disease risk likely from climate change" by Drew Costley, The Register-Herald, April 28, 2022.)

The U.S. is already working to assist middle- and low-income countries strengthen their health care systems by supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. The president’s recent pledge of $2 billion a year for a new three-year cycle will inspire other donors to put up $12 billion to help countries save millions of lives. We can help by asking our members of Congress to support this pledge with funding and to take actions that will help stem climate change and all of its negative fallout, like new diseases that threaten us once again.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, WA

https://www.register-herald.com/opinion/congress-can-act-on-climate-change/article_e1581230-cdb3-11ec-8a40-0304a86e4282.html
U.S. leads funding initiative that boosts battle against AIDS, TB and malaria

September 13, 2022

As monkeypox hits West Virginia, we are reminded of how quickly disease can spread to and from anywhere on the planet. (“WVU student tests positive for monkeypox,” the Editor's Pick online at The Register-Herald, Sept. 7, 2022.)

One important step our government is taking to protect us is hosting the funding conference this month for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. Nations will gather to pledge to this successful effort to lift all boats: increase many countries’ ability to fight disease in a way that works for them, strengthening their health care systems in the process.

The Global Fund has helped save millions of lives over the last 20 years and will continue its work to help reclaim success over these three diseases, momentarily set back due to the Covid pandemic. America’s bipartisan commitment of funds can only be unlocked by a 2 - 1 match from other donors. We can thank our members of Congress from both parties for their efforts to continue this life-saving work, and hope other countries will continue to do the same.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, WA

Congress should invest in fight against TB (Opinion)

By Dr. Josephine Reece

December 13, 2022

Last week, the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee passed the End Tuberculosis Now Act. This legislation directs the U.S. Agency for International Development to be aggressive in setting goals to reach and treat those populations most vulnerable to infection and strengthens coordination with global organizations to create and employ a comprehensive global TB response.

Perhaps most importantly, it provides support for research and development of innovative tools such as vaccines and newer medications to help control and prevent even drug resistant strains of TB.

Tuberculosis is the second leading deadly infections disease after COVID-19 and overwhelmingly harms the marginalized and poor. As a global health physician who has worked in sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade, I've seen firsthand how deadly TB can be, particularly in the young, in the impoverished, and especially in those that are living with HIV – and this was before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The World Health Organization reported that not only did mortality from TB increase in 2020 and 2021, with up to 1.6 million deaths last year, but the incidence of TB has risen for the first time in almost 20 years. The is unacceptable for a disease that is preventable and curable, if given the resources to detect, treat and limit resistance. Currently, only about a third of this with MDR-TB (multi-drug resistant TB) are actually receiving adequate treatment.

The COVID-19 pandemic effectively stymied progress toward ending TB. At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was right to shift TB resources to combat this new airborne respiratory infection, particularly given the lack of knowledge and experience with a novel coronavirus spreading across the globe. However, an
Agency for International Development survey found that this rapid response, while needed, did lead to the loss of previously well-established TB programs, exhausting the health workforce, infrastructure and resources globally.

The fatality of TB and the futility of our current progress and funding have now been exaggerated as we struggle to reimplement the strategies of early detection through rapid testing, isolation and contact tracing, and directly observed treatment with adequate supplies of effective medication and a robust health care staff. It will take a monumental commitment to recoup what was lost and rebuild the groundwork for our global TB management.

Although 98% of TB cases and deaths are in low- and middle-income countries, G20 nations, which represent the largest economies, account for nearly half of all infections. The first call to action on TB from the G20 nations occurred ahead of their most recent summit this past November in Indonesia. It is estimated that $250 billion is needed to reach the U.N. sustainable development goals of ending TB by 2030. The Stop TB Partnership expects another 43 million people will be infected with TB leading to 6.6 million deaths by 2030, if we do not quickly change direction to reach these goals. These deaths will not only be distressing on communities and families but could lead to an economic loss of $1 trillion by 2030.

The End TB Now Act represents a rare opportunity to get the world back on track to meet the global goals of combatting tuberculosis. With the support of our W.Va. congressional delegation, we can take a leadership role in saving more lives and preventing major economic loss.

TB has persisted for way too long. It was the leading infectious cause of death prior to COVID and is not having an increase in its incidence and mortality. We have the power to change this trajectory for good. Sens. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., and Joe Machin, D-W.Va., along with Carol Miller, R-W.Va., should cast their votes in favor of this much-needed measure for health before the end of the year.

Dr. Josephine Reece, of Morgantown, is one of the founding members of RESULTS West Virginia.
Wisconsin media
Wyoming media
RESULTS sets aside partisan identities to help end poverty

January 23, 2022

I really appreciated Ron Rabou's Sunday essay about learning to give up things we treasure; how Rabou's father-in-law had blessed his son by giving the boy a Cadillac the grandfather could no longer use.

As I reread the first paragraph of the article, talking about how politics turned as cutthroat as ever as soon as the holidays were over, I couldn't help thinking (and I feel sure Rabou would agree) that we could bless ourselves and others by giving up a lot of the angry, bitter politics we cling to.

WTE's recent “Our Faces” section highlighted my efforts with RESULTS, a nonpartisan organization working to end poverty by advocating for policies that affect health, education and economic opportunity around the world – including here in the U.S. While our work is nonpartisan, that doesn't mean individual members don't have partisan identities! It means that we give up those roles when we meet or call or email our members of Congress as RESULTS volunteers.

We bring problems to their attention and offer solutions. We build relationships with them and their staffs to better understand their perspectives and concerns so that we can help them embrace the solutions we offer.

If you are interested in having your voice heard, but reluctant to get involved in the hatefulness you hear about in the news, “Our Faces” offered the volunteer intake link at RESULTS.org. I would certainly encourage using that avenue – or go to the website and poke around to get a better idea of our work. If you are leery of just jumping in like that, contact us through “RESULTS Wyoming” on Facebook. I don’t bite, and I am glad to “give up” a few minutes of my time to talk about RESULTS.

– Anne Erdmann, Cheyenne
Tell Congress you want to see action on bill to end TB pandemic

November 16, 2022

I meant to write sooner, but life gets in the way.

S. 3386, the End TB Now bill, was introduced and sent to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Committee Chairman Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., is the lead sponsor, so you would think this bill should have moved in his committee some time ago. But, as I said, life seems to get in the way.

The bill sets ending the global tuberculosis pandemic as a major objective of U.S. foreign policy. But it is much more than a feel-good statement. Aligning goals and accountability with those of other major players in the fight to end TB, it provides specific actions and outcome expectations for USAID and tools for measuring its effectiveness, with requirements for reporting to Congress.

In the short time remaining for this session of Congress, the focus will be on “must pass” bills – likely with a lot of disagreement, or the bills would probably not have waited so long for action! But S. 3386 seems to have languished just because it is such a low-profile bill and addresses what would seem an uncontroversial purpose.

COVID-19 shows us how a pandemic can devastate national economies and stability. In the U.S. we have not felt the force of the TB pandemic as other countries have. But countries like India, Indonesia, the Philippines and many countries in Africa are struggling; and the effects of COVID only made their fight against TB harder. Instability in those countries creates a threat to U.S. security, as populations react to crumbing economies and ineffective governments.
I talked with Sen. Barrasso’s office about the bill and emailed Sen. Lummis, asking their support as co-sponsors and advocates to move the bill forward quickly. Rep. Cheney could add her name as a House cosponsor of the companion bill, H.R. 8654.

Time is short, but you can still let our delegation know that you want to see action on these bills before the end of the year.

– Ann Erdmann, Cheyenne

National media
**Advocacy Update: The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria**

February 23, 2022

This month I want to talk about The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria (Global Fund), for which the US is hosting its Seventh Replenishment Conference later this year. Together Women Rise advocates learned about the Global Fund on our Feb 15th webinar. Click HERE to see the webinar recording and slides.

The Global Fund is a multilateral organization that began in 2002 to address the pandemics that were never extinguished — HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria — which were infecting and killing millions of people, primarily in the Global South.

So what is a multilateral organization? And what is replenishment about?

According to The Borgen Project: “Multilateral organizations are formed by three or more nations to work on issues that are relevant to each of them. They ensure participation by all in the management of world affairs while ensuring the legitimacy of any relief efforts being implemented. Multilateral organizations also effectively deal with issues that are global priorities by reducing the risk of making overly quick and careless decisions in resolving issues.”

Funding such a structure relies on replenishments: According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): “Multilateral organizations rely on the financial contributions of their members, shareholders, and other stakeholders to function and carry out their operations. The volume and quality of funding they receive have crucial implications for their capacity to deliver.” This funding system is premised on replenishments which take place periodically, during which the various actors involved make their financial pledges.

The Global Fund partnership has saved more than 44 million lives since its inception in 2002, cutting deaths from these three diseases in half in countries...
where the Global Fund has invested. The Global Fund is distinctive for its emphasis on country ownership, as well as its inclusive partnerships with the private sector, affected populations, faith-based organizations, and civil society.

As we enter the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, bold investments in this lifesaving work are more crucial than ever to get back on track toward eliminating these infectious diseases while mitigating COVID-19’s disruptions to the fight against them. Comparing 2020 to 2019:

- HIV prevention services declined by 11%,
- 1 million fewer people were treated for TB
- Malaria testing dropped by 4%.

That is why the Global Fund must maintain focus on combating AIDS, TB, and malaria and addressing the backsliding caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. A US contribution to the Global Fund should be separate and additive to COVID-19 response efforts; it should not come at the expense of other crucial US investments in global development and humanitarian response.

Why is the Global Fund so important to women and girls?

Women and girls have suffered disproportionately more during the COVID-19 pandemic and the resources provided by the Global Fund are essential to them.

According to the Global Fund: “Adolescent girls and young women remain a key focus for the Global Fund’s response to HIV.” By increasing investments and focusing on the 13 priority countries where the HIV burden is the highest, “new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women have dropped by 41 per cent since 2010.”

The Global Fund strategically promotes human rights and gender equality, recognizing the urgent need to eliminate health disparities among men and women.

Due to cultural norms and inequalities, women may have less access to TB treatment and prevention services than men. Diagnostic delays and lower service efficiency may be due to increased stigma associated with having TB and the non-
integration of TB services with other reproductive, maternal and child health services. Male family members may be unwilling to pay for these services, and women’s health may not be considered as important within the family.

Susceptibility to malaria does not differentiate among the sexes. However, malaria can be devastating during pregnancy, both for the mother and the fetus, increasing the risks of miscarriage and maternal death. And it is a leading killer of children under five.

The Global Fund projects that for every $1 invested, it will generate $19 in economic returns and health gains, contributing to direct economic benefits for the US. And, while making enormous economic sense, it is crucial that we continue to address the pandemics that still remain with us, impacting millions of lives in the Global South.

The US is the largest donor to the Global Fund, typically contributing one-third of the total amount. We’ll need strong US leadership later this year to ensure that the replenishment conference is a success. We hope you will join us as we advocate for women and girls for improved access to healthcare via the Global Fund. To learn more about the Global Fund and how we can support this replenishment, check out our Feb 15th advocacy webinar and the RESULTS blog HERE.

If you would like to sign up for our Advocacy Group with RESULTS, please click HERE. Questions? Email advocacy@togetherwomenrise.org.

– Leslye Heilig, Advocacy Committee Chair

https://togetherwomenrise.org/the-global-fund/#more-45710
March 29, 2022

March 24th was World TB Day, and I thought it appropriate to discuss long-time pandemics, such as tuberculosis, as well as the current COVID pandemic.

Let’s begin with the current COVID-19 pandemic. For much of the past 12+ months, our advocacy has focused on securing $17 billion for global vaccine equity. We and our partner organizations have worked very hard at this, but sadly Congress failed us when they did not provide ANY COVID emergency funding in the recently-passed omnibus spending legislation for fiscal year 2022. Due to disagreements regarding unspent funds on the domestic COVID front, Congress failed to provide any global vaccine support. However, there is no unspent money for global vaccines. As of now, we hope that the Senate will approve emergency funding at $5 billion for global vaccines—the amount that President Biden had requested, knowing full well that this was an inadequate sum. Stay tuned.

As has been said many times before, until the world is vaccinated against COVID-19, none of us are safe. And the longer we experience vaccine inequity — vaccine apartheid — the greater the risk of viral mutation leading to a more severe variant or one that evades the protection from our current vaccines.

So let’s go back to the story of tuberculosis. TB is a pandemic that has been with us for hundreds of years; it used to be called consumption. The last and only vaccine was developed 100 years ago, and it’s not very effective. COVID showed us that we have the ability to create new and effective vaccines for many diseases, but we don’t have the political will to spend those resources on pandemics that do not impact wealthier countries in the same way they do low-income countries. We are seeing a similar pattern evolve for COVID-19.
On World TB Day, we asked that our government provide additional funds for TB research, testing, and treatment as well as for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. We must support the Global Fund to make up for lost time as many of its resources have been repurposed to address COVID-19.

Pre-COVID we were seeing heartening trends in addressing TB. The 2020 Global Tuberculosis Report stated that 1.4 million more people got care for tuberculosis between 2015 and 2019, and the world was working toward the ambitious but achievable goal of ending the TB epidemic by 2030. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered disastrous healthcare disruptions, including care for tuberculosis patients. The results have been devastating and will continue to be so unless we act. The Stop TB Partnership suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic could contribute to 6.3 million additional cases of TB and a doubling of TB deaths over the next three years.

Women are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and unable to access adequate diagnosis and treatment for TB. And TB is the leading cause of infertility worldwide as well as leading to increased maternal deaths. Women and children account for 44% of cases of tuberculosis. According to the Treatment Action Group, “TB is one of the top three causes of death among women ages 15–45, killing half a million women worldwide each year. TB causes between 6% and 15% of all maternal deaths.”

So, tuberculosis is clearly a women’s issue, along with HIV/AIDS. Let’s continue to support the work of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. We have an excellent opportunity to do that over the coming months as we push the US to exert bold leadership when it hosts the Global Fund replenishment conference later this year.

To take action on this, join us on April 18 at 8:30 pm ET for our Monthly Advocacy Webinar. Sign up here.

If you would like to learn more about tuberculosis and the impact of COVID-19, I encourage you to watch this sobering presentation from the most recent RESULTS Global Poverty Policy Forum with Dr. Madhukar Pai from McGill University. You can also read more from Dr. Pai here.
– Leslye Heilig, *Advocacy Committee Chair*

[https://togetherwomenrise.org/tuberculosis-is-a-womans-issue/](https://togetherwomenrise.org/tuberculosis-is-a-womans-issue/)
How I Live My Humanist Values by Beth Wilson

Spring 2022

By Beth Wilson

“Our world is filled with people ... whose opportunities to thrive are deeply constrained ... RESULTS provides thousands of people the opportunity to be strategic in creating a more humane world. That work is informed by my Humanist belief in science (and) the importance of human life.

“Humanism encourages those of us who embrace it to live as fully as we can, in all the authentic wonder and curiosity that the human spirit can generate. It summons us to a persistent obedience to evidence and reason, to recognize in our deepest and most beautiful longings not the world that is, but the world that might be, if we, by our courage, intelligence, and dedication, will make it so.” — Kendyl L.R. Gibbons, Humanist Voices in Unitarian Universalism.

Raised American Baptist, as a late teen I realized that I could not conjure up the essential faith in Jesus that was required. I didn't feel a need to be saved, as I didn't think I was especially sinful or damned. Thank goodness!

However, I did have a strong moral core, with a clear sense that I had a mission in my life. I just wasn't sure what it was. I have always felt that the world is profoundly sacred, and I feel extraordinarily lucky to have been gifted with life.

Twenty-four years ago, my husband and I stumbled upon our local UU church, Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. We realized immediately that we had
found our spiritual home and tribe. In that church we were introduced to RESULTS, an organization that trains and supports volunteers to lobby Congress to end global and U.S. poverty.

When offered the opportunity to make a difference at the global level, speaking to the most powerful leaders in the world to end poverty, I couldn’t resist. I transitioned my volunteering from local habitat protection to global poverty reduction.

In his essay “Our Humanist Legacy, Seventy Years of Religious Humanism,” William F. Schulz says “… consider religious humanism’s courageous faith that the future of the world is in human hands—not those of an angry God or inexorable fate. Humanism beckons us to believe that we can make a difference to history.” [italics added]

The official “elevator speech” states:

RESULTS is a movement of passionate, committed everyday people. Together we use our voices to influence political decisions that will bring an end to poverty. As volunteers, we receive training, support, and inspiration to become skilled advocates. In time, we learn to effectively advise policy makers, building them towards decisions that improve access to health, education and economic opportunity. Together we realize the incredible power we possess to use our voices to change the world.

Volunteer advocates are backed by in-depth research, the legislative expertise of RESULTS staff, and detailed training. We learn to write letters, work with the media, and meet with members of Congress. With every hour of our time, we multiply our impact through advocacy—whether helping change policy to support millions of families putting food on the table or helping raise billions of dollars for the most vulnerable children in the U.S. and around the world. RESULTS advocates are not paid lobbyists: we are volunteers. We come from every corner of the country and around the world. We prove that every voice has power—and that by bringing all of our voices together, we can change the world.” (Source: https://www.results.org)
When my husband and I joined RESULTS 15 years ago, we started a local group which continues to grow. Our letters to the editor of our local newspaper are printed frequently. We have a wonderful relationship with our U.S. representative, who has become a leader on anti-poverty legislation. We attend our regional and annual RESULTS International Conference in Washington, D.C., where we meet with our senators and representatives and their aides to advocate for their support on very specific bills and budget items.

I have been a Co-Group Leader, twice elected to represent the grassroots volunteers on the national Board of Directors, serve as a volunteer Regional Coordinator, coaching other RESULTS groups in the religious humanism spring 2022 volume xlix number 2 page 3 Mountain Time Zone, and twice worked part-time for as a grassroots fundraising coach. This is my passion.

Our world is filled with people, especially children, whose opportunities to thrive are deeply constrained due to poverty, lack of education, little or no access to effective health care, subjugation of women and minorities and profound inequities in wealth distribution in the U.S. and worldwide. RESULTS provides thousands of people the opportunity to be strategic in creating a more humane world. That work is informed by my Humanist belief in science, the importance of human life, the power and need of individuals to take effective action, and gratitude for the responsiveness of our elected officials when we treat them with respect and dignity.

There are RESULTS groups in every state and in most large cities in the U.S. We also have affiliate organizations in Canada, the U.K., Australia, Japan and South Korea, and global partnerships in many countries in Africa and Asia, Latin America and Europe.

We advocate for U.S. funding of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, the Global Partnership for Education, and for global nutrition and healthcare through USAID. At the national level we advocate for funding for housing programs and for tax policies that lift people out of poverty.

“Justice is what love looks like in public,” said Dr. Cornel West, professor of Philosophy at Union Theological Seminary and professor emeritus at Princeton
University. RESULTS is a powerful way to live love in public—building a future that Humanism invites us to create.

With edits to make it gender-neutral and inclusive of all, I agree with the concluding statement of the First Humanist Manifesto (1933): “People are at last becoming aware that we, together, are responsible for the realization of the world of our dreams, that we have within ourselves the power for its achievement. We must set intelligence and will to the task.”

https://mcusercontent.com/04dd0db69c4b726ba6f53d44e/files/c089081b-5ed4-6a59-6e15-f8083be7d1cd/religious_humanism_49_2_spring_2022.pdf
The Impact of COVID & the Ukraine War on Global Malnutrition

May 26, 2022

It was a pleasure speaking about why and what we are advocating for at Together Women Rise’s May national webinar. For those of who missed it, the recording can be found here. Our past two grantees—Yamba Malawi and Second Mile Haiti—are excellent examples of why and how we can address malnutrition. It is important to both support our grantees and their direct services as well as to advocate for Congress to fund nutrition, maternal and child health on a macro level. Each of these approaches — and even better, both together — will go a long way toward eliminating the tragedy of malnutrition.

To understand malnutrition we should begin with the definitions:

**Stunting** is based on a child's height and age, and it is a measure of chronic nutritional deficiency. The child is small—physically and developmentally—for their age.

**Wasting** is based on a child's weight and height, and it is a measure of acute nutritional deficiency. The child is underweight for their height, generally on an acute basis.

While wasting has a greater acute risk of death, stunting has a hugely negative effect on development, generating enormous economic costs through loss of human potential. It is devastating to see children functioning far below their chronologic age due to these permanent developmental insults. You might want to watch the following interactive video by Roger Thurow, as he follows the story of Hagirso, a boy in Ethiopia who he has followed over two decades as Hagirso tries to overcome the impact of stunting. This powerful story by the author of *The First 1000 Days*, sums up the need to prevent stunting far better than words can do. In fact, I
often share it with congressional staff when I am asking for funding related to global malnutrition—a picture speaks a thousand words.

Food insecurity or hunger—both of which are widespread and rapidly increasing—and malnutrition are distinctly different. But both have been adversely impacted by the COVID pandemic and recently by the war in Ukraine. To this we must add the tremendous impact of climate change. Together, the net effect has been that people are choosing to leave their homes in order to feed their families—choosing to become refugees.

The impact of conflict added atop the pandemic is huge. Ukraine and Russia together represent the bread basket of the world—both in terms of grain produced and exported as well as being the major source of nitrogen for fertilizer. According to David Beasley, head of the World Food Program (WFP), they are now taking half rations from the hungry child and redirecting it to the starving one. What a terrible choice to be forced to make—essentially who shall live! And since half of the grain purchased by the WFP comes from Ukraine, food has been weaponized in this conflict. Despite the overall wealth in the world, we are allowing women and children to starve. We have the knowledge and the resources to combat malnutrition. The question is do we have the political will?

**The numbers paint a truly disturbing picture: 22% of the world’s young children, or 149 million, are stunted and another 45 million are wasted.**

**Adding the impact of COVID means an additional 40 million wasted children will be seen between 2020 and 2030 as well as an additional 22 million with stunting.**

Although we have greatly decreased the number of deaths in children under five over the past several decades, we have not ended the nutrition story.

I invite you to join us, as together we make a difference. You can reach out to your members of Congress on this issue, consider sending a letter to the editor, or join one of our webinars and see what advocacy is all about.

Our next monthly Advocacy Webinar will be on June 21 at 8:30 pm ET. You can sign up [HERE](#).
Here are some helpful links.

https://togetherwomenrise.org/advocacy/dfw-national-advocacy-chapter/


https://results.org/blog/house-passed-bipartisan-malnutrition-bill-now-onto-the-senate/

– Leslye Heilig, Co-Chair of Together Women Rise Advocacy Group with RESULTS

https://togetherwomenrise.org/advocacy-update-2/
Advocacy Update: Your Actions Can Make a Difference!

June 24, 2022

For many of us, summer is the time to kick back and relax. But, hunger and illness do not take a summer vacation.

For me, this summer has begun with multiple meetings with my members of Congress, the personal highlight of which was a meeting with Senator Ed Markey (D-MA). The Together Women Rise Advocacy Group continues to advocate for funding for The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria as well as improved funding and policy to prevent and treat global malnutrition. Additionally, some of our members have joined our partners at RESULTS for congressional meetings, and have also advocated for the Child Tax Credit, which has been shown to dramatically reduce child poverty in the US. This is one of many ways in which the experience gained by advocating for global issues can be reflected in actions we can then take at home. Learning to become an effective advocate and building relationships enables us to increase our influence on any issue we care about.

Since I have recently written here about the Global Fund, malnutrition, and tuberculosis, I will not repeat myself. However, with the confluence of a third year of COVID, climate change causing droughts and famine, and the Russian aggression in Ukraine that has devastated global nutrition, the time to speak up — to raise our voices — is now.

Women and children are the most marginalized and the most severely impacted during these difficult times. But, you can make a difference by speaking out to your members of Congress on these issues. Individual constituents do influence their legislators — I can attest to this from actual experience.

So, this summer would you consider writing to your Senators and asking them to co-sponsor the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (Senate
2956)? For starters, you could take this easy online action. If you want to have an even greater impact, you could contact me directly at advocacy@togetherwomenrise.org, and I can assist you in crafting a letter and finding the foreign policy aide in your senator's office to whom you should send it.

I know that our individual actions make a difference. Imagine if we combined our voice with the voices of the thousands of Together Women Rise members ... what an impactful power we could become! Consider taking this action this summer. And, join us if you would like to take the next step.

Our advocacy webinars this summer will take place on July 19 and August 16, both at 8:30 pm ET. If you would like to receive the links to these webinars or learn more about our advocacy efforts, please sign up HERE.

– Leslye Heilig, Co-Chair of Together Women Rise Advocacy Group with RESULTS

https://togetherwomenrise.org/your-actions-can-make-a-difference/
Advocating for Global Education

August 30, 2022

As summer comes to an end and we ready our kids to return to school, there are many children missing out on education. In many low-income countries, children — especially girls — will not be returning to school due to inadequate education systems, discrimination, early and forced marriage, or pregnancy as a result of transactional sex or gender-based violence. And when this happens, most girls are unable to return to school. Their education comes to an abrupt end, and their futures are forever changed.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted students worldwide, and school closures continue to disrupt the education of more than 616 million students. Additional crises, such as those in Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Yemen have only increased these gaps in education, with girls, low-income children, and children with disabilities facing the greatest barriers to education. When kids are out of school, not only do they fall behind on education, they miss essential meals as many rely on at least one regular daily meal while attending school.

According to the World Bank, “individuals as well as countries benefit from girls being educated. Better-educated women tend to be more informed about nutrition and healthcare, have fewer children, marry at a later age, and their children are usually healthier, should they choose to become mothers. They are more likely to participate in the formal labor market and earn higher incomes.” A recent World Bank study estimates that the “limited educational opportunities for girls, and barriers to completing 12 years of education, cost countries between US$15 trillion and $30 trillion in lost lifetime productivity and earnings.”

Two-thirds of all countries have reached gender parity in primary school enrollment. In low-income countries, many in Sub-Saharan Africa, secondary school completion rates for girls continue to lag, with only 36% of girls completing
lower secondary school compared to 44% of boys. By the time we reach upper secondary school, completion rates have dropped further, with the rate 26% for young men and 21% for young women.

We can make a connection between girls’ education and reducing the adverse effects of climate change. According to Drawdown.org, in their recent report “Drawdown Lift”, March 2022 on Climate-Poverty connections: “Education is a fundamental human right for both girls and boys. Moreover, girls’ education plays an important role in building adaptive capacity and reducing vulnerability to climate-related extreme events. Educated women can better protect themselves and their families from environmental shocks and are able to participate more fully in decision-making. Today, 129 million girls are out of school worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a substantive disruption in education, and projections suggest that as many as 11 million girls might not return to school. This deprivation can hinder the ability to build long-term community resilience to climate change, enhance health, improve gender equality and social equity, eradicate poverty, and foster peace and justice.”

Education, in particular for girls and women, opens so many doors. It is connected to our health, poverty, climate change, and our general resilience.

To begin our fall advocacy, we are working to secure the reauthorization of The READ Act. Earlier this year we acted on funding global education through the appropriations process; now, we are addressing how good policy will make the most of those funds. The READ ACT ensures USAID coordinates with low-income partner countries to reach the most marginalized, particularly girls, with quality education and to reduce the hurdles girls face to stay in school.

You can influence this process by writing to your Senators, encouraging them to support this bill. This can be done quickly and easily online at the RESULTS website here. Try to personalize your message—why is girls’ education important to you? Have you been touched by the success of one of our grantees? How has education enhanced your life? And then consider increasing the impact by sharing this action with friends and fellow Together Women Rise members. You could even consider doing this together as a group activity at your next Rise meeting. When our
legislators hear from multiple constituents, you can rest assured you will get their attention.

Please join us for our next Advocacy group webinar on September 20th at 8:30 PM ET. We have created a safe non-partisan space, where you can learn about and practice the tools of advocacy and the rewards of building relationships with your legislators.

– Leslye Heilig, Co-Chair of Together Women Rise Advocacy Group with RESULTS

https://togetherwomenrise.org/advocacy-update-3/#more-46481
Inspirational quotes

August 30, 2022

Thanks for running the poll “What is your favorite inspirational quote?” in the August issue. I would add American anthropologist Margaret Mead’s “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.” My 30 years as a volunteer with RESULTS (results.org) have proven the truth of these words.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Washington

No online link
Making a difference

December 31, 2022

Thanks for the inspirational articles in the December issue (“World changers”) about people “being the change they wish to see in the world.” We may not all have the time to do these things, but everyone can do something to address these problems: Ask our members of Congress to pass legislation to end hunger and make sure a quality education is available to all. In this way we can use our voices to make a difference.

– Willie Dickerson, Snohomish, Washington

No online link