Support PEPFAR, the President’s Global AIDS Initiative, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria in FY18

Please join Senators Johnny Isakson and Chris Coons in the call for continued funding for Global HIV/AIDS in both PEPFAR and the Global Fund in fiscal year 2018. For information, or to sign onto the letter, please contact Ryan_Evans@isakson.senate.gov or Christy_Gleason@coons.senate.gov

**The closing date for this letter is COB Friday, May 26, 2017**

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy:

We are writing to request you continue critical investments in global health programs, in particular the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund). We greatly appreciate your past leadership in ensuring these programs are robustly funded. We look to you again as PEPFAR and the Global Fund work toward rapid acceleration of HIV prevention and treatment programs as global efforts focus on the goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

U.S. leadership through PEPFAR and other bilateral investments, along with multilateral investments in the Global Fund, have been transformative in fighting the deadly HIV/AIDS epidemic that was devastating countries, and the results are incredible. In 2016, PEPFAR supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for 11.5 million people, including 1.1 million children. Through PEPFAR support, more than 220,000 health workers received critical training to deliver HIV treatment and other medical services.

Additionally, the Global Fund plays a critical role in combatting HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria. As of mid-2016, programs financed by the Global Fund resulted in 10 million people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS; 16.6 million people receiving treatment for tuberculosis; and distribution of 713 million insecticide treated nets for the prevention of malaria. For every $1 invested by the United States, $2 has been committed by other governments around the world, and additional resources are contributed by private sector partners - a good return on investment that ensures that the response to fighting HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria is shared by the international community.

These investments and efforts not only improve HIV care, they enable countries to improve the overall health of their citizens by creating a lasting infrastructure that positions partner countries to respond to a range of health challenges and threats. Through the development of Partnership Frameworks, more than 20 countries and two regions have set out a path towards country ownership and achieving a national HIV/AIDS strategy. The Global Fund’s investments in new technologies and programs improve effectiveness, address procurement and human resources challenges, and lower costs.

Through U.S. leadership and by partnering with developing countries, these investments also contribute to the stability of countries where investments are made. A report by former Senators Bill Frist and Tom Daschle noted PEPFAR is a “potential example of strategic health diplomacy
– and a model for smart, effective and bi-partisan foreign policy.” Providing robust support for PEPFAR and the Global Fund bolsters U.S. leadership in the world, and increases our ability to strengthen health systems that protect against virulent disease outbreaks, while making progress in combatting tuberculosis and malaria.

Finally, as you know, the research and development work on an AIDS vaccine continues to yield important scientific breakthroughs. American researchers, as well as small- and medium-sized biotechnology companies, are driving much of this innovative research that has not only moved us closer to a game-changing medical breakthrough, but also positions the United States to lead a global prevention revolution that will save both money and lives. We ask that you consider including FY2018 report language that demonstrates our continued commitment to this effort. The language should highlight that developing a vaccine is essential to the fight against malaria and HIV, and it would encourage USAID to continue funding to support their advancement.

We are on track to achieving an AIDS-free generation—but without continued financial support from the U.S. government, our gains could quickly recede. We once again look to your leadership in the fight against this deadly disease.

Thank you for considering our request and for your ongoing critical leadership in fighting HIV/AIDS.

Sincerely,

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Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON                          Senator CHRIS COONS