

October 25, 2016

The Honorable Lindsey Graham, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee for
State and Foreign Operations, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee for
State and Foreign Operations, U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy:

Thank you for your support and continued commitment for the Maternal and Child Health account and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, in the Fiscal Year 2017 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill. As members of the Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Roundtable, the U.S. Coalition for Child Survival, and partner organizations, we are grateful for your efforts to preserve funding for these programs that saves lives and creates economic stability in developing countries.

As you begin to conference the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2017 with the House, we strongly urge you to support the higher funding level in the House bill of \$864.5 million for Maternal and Child Health (MCH) – including \$275 million for Gavi, in the final bill, while maintaining funding for UNICEF at \$132.5 million in the International Organizations & Programs account.

As you know, the critical funding for these programs has dramatically improved progress in global efforts to end preventable child and maternal deaths. The annual number of under-five deaths has fallen by more than 50 percent from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2014. Additionally, in the 24 countries where U.S. involvement has been the greatest, maternal mortality has declined an average of 5 percent each year, more than double the global average.

Despite remarkable progress and return on investments, the work is not yet done. However, the U.S. Agency for International Development has developed a country-led roadmap with benchmark targets for saving an additional 15 million child lives and 600,000 women's lives by the year 2020. Scientists and global health experts stand in agreement that the goal that once seemed unreachable is now achievable, but the political will and resources are necessary to reach the goal. Funding for the MCH account and other global health programs is among the most cost-effective, life-saving investments the U.S. can make.

We applaud the leadership you have demonstrated and urge you to continue strong support for these programs in Fiscal Year 2017. **To support the goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths, we urge you to negotiate for the higher Fiscal Year 2017 House level funding for MCH, including \$275 million for Gavi.** It is vital to make these robust investments while also maintaining funding for UNICEF and not at the expense of other critical global health, and poverty-focused humanitarian and development programs that support the well-being of women, newborns, and children to enable the United States to reach its goal of ending extreme poverty and creating a more stable, prosperous world.

Thank you again for your continued leadership.

In partnership,

Action Against Hunger
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Red Cross
Better World Campaign

Bread for the World
CARE USA
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Christian Connections for International Health
ChildFund International
CORE Group
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Every Mother Counts
Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth, an initiative of Seattle Children's
Global Health Council
Global Poverty Project
IMA World Health
InterAction
John Snow, Inc.
Management Sciences for Health
PAI
PATH
Project HOPE
RESULTS
Save the Children
Save the Children Action Network
Shot@Life
The Hunger Project
U.S. Fund for UNICEF
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
WaterAid
White Ribbon Alliance
World Vision US