

May 9, 2012

Dear Senator:

We, the undersigned U.S.-based religious institutions, urge you to pass a faithful budget that increases funding above FY 2012 levels for poverty-focused international development, humanitarian assistance and global health programs within State and Foreign Operations.

We believe that concern for the impoverished, suffering, and vulnerable is at the heart of God's call for human action. Our communities of faith are engaged in humanitarian and sustainable development programs with our partners around the world. We see first-hand the devastating impact of hunger, sickness and poverty on individuals, families, communities and entire nations.

Funds that the federal government dedicates to addressing poverty, supporting development, and responding to humanitarian crises augment and leverage a tremendous amount of funding and work by faith communities and other non-governmental organizations. But this life-saving work cannot succeed without a robust U.S. commitment.

Using less than one percent of the federal budget, poverty-focused foreign assistance saves lives, lays the groundwork for economic growth around the world and fosters global human security. Its programs alleviate hunger and malnutrition, help communities access clean water and sanitation, facilitate rural development, educate children, combat deadly but preventable diseases and promote global health.

As you and your colleagues mark up the FY 2013 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill we strongly urge you to increase funding for these international poverty-focused development assistance lifelines that bring new hope to communities around the world and contribute to a more stable and secure world for all people.

Thank you for your consideration and continued leadership on these important issues.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee

American Jewish World Service

Bread for the World

Central Conference of American Rabbis

Christian Connections for International Health

Church of the Brethren

Church World Service

Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Disciples Center for Public Witness, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Episcopal Church
Food for the Hungry
Franciscan Action Network
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
Holy Name Province Franciscan JPIC Office
Islamic Society of North America
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Lutheran World Relief
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
Missionary Oblates
Muslim Public Affairs Council
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Office of Social Justice of the Christian Reformed Church
Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
Progressive National Baptist Convention
The Rabbinical Assembly
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Institute Justice Team
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society