

April 13, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
Senate Committee on Appropriations
127 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Mikulski, Chairman Graham, and Ranking Member Leahy;

Thank you for your leadership in Congress in support of maternal and child health programs serving the most vulnerable. As faith-based organizations who view these programs as a moral responsibility of the United States, we are grateful for your commitment to saving the lives of women and children around the world.

While many gains have been made toward improving health, nutrition and livelihoods for many families in developing countries, we know that more needs to be done. Millions of children continue to die each year from mostly preventable causes and mothers continue to lose their lives from treatable complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Millions more children suffer from stunting and other physical and mental deficits resulting from poor health and malnutrition.

As you consider appropriations for the State, Foreign Operations and Related programs bill for Fiscal Year 2016, we encourage strong funding for life-saving programs that evidence has shown can make a dramatic impact in reducing the 6.3 million preventable child deaths and 289,000 maternal deaths annually. These accounts include Maternal and Child Health (MCH), nutrition and family planning, all of which support interventions proven to reduce mortality and morbidity in mothers and children and improve the well-being of the entire family.

We know that there are many difficult decisions that must be made during the appropriations process. However, as we all work to respond to the needs of the poor and vulnerable in the developing world, we hope that you will prioritize the programs and accounts that support critical efforts to save and sustain life. These are investments in the future – investments that support strong families and communities.

Thank you again for your continued leadership on these important issues.

Signed,

