



March 9, 2017

Dear President Donald J. Trump, Vice-President Mike Pence, and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson,

Over the past two Administrations, our country has been a leader in saving the lives of millions of mothers, children, and families in developing nations because of our commitment to uplifting the world's poorest.

We know our international affairs budget is a mere one percent of the total U.S. budget. Severe cuts to the 150 account, such as the 37 percent figure that has been widely reported in the media, will accomplish very little in the important effort to balance the overall budget. Yet, these pennies to the dollar translate into millions of lives saved.

We write as leaders of faith to showcase a united front of support for the 150 account for global health, humanitarian assistance and development. Because this is a fraction of our budget, we ask that each area remains fully funded.

From Genesis to Revelation, the Scriptures compel us to care for the marginalized—to care for the widow, the orphan, and the refugee. Moses, Ruth, Solomon, and the Prophets call us to take a stand for those who have no voice. Jesus models healing the sick, raising the dead, and cleansing the lepers. He implores us to care for the prisoner, the naked, the hungry, and the thirsty. And James tells us this is the heart of religion (1:27). The single thread of the Bible is to lay down our lives for one another.

If we can protect the lives of mothers and children, we can intervene not just to save lives but also to establish a foundation of health and wellness to uplift communities, societies, and nations out of extreme poverty.

Beyond our calling to care for the world's poorest as a moral or economic commitment, this is also in the best interest of our national security. We know that development is a critical prevention tool that protects nations from becoming fragile and failed states that are ripe breeding grounds for violent extremism and terrorism.

Supporting foreign assistance isn't just the right thing to do; it's the smart thing to do.

We welcome the opportunity for continued dialogue with you and your Administration.

Sincerely,

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