

April 25, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee:

As members of the Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC)—a group of more than 25 nonprofit organizations working to increase awareness of the vital role health technologies play in saving lives in the developing world—we write to highlight the critical role of US programs that support global health research and development (R&D) and encourage your continued support for this important work.

US investment in the development of new vaccines, drugs, devices, diagnostics, and other health technologies is essential to addressing some of the world's most pressing health challenges—achieving an AIDS-free generation, curbing the spread of malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), and ending preventable child deaths. We recognize that you face many difficult decisions and are grateful for the Committee's ongoing support for global health R&D within the Department of Health and Human Services. New global health tools and technologies hold promise to dramatically improve the lives of those living in the poorest countries around the world—and uphold American health security—and we ask for your continued support for programs that support global health R&D within the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Biological Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) in fiscal year (FY) 2018.

To achieve this goal, we urge you to maintain robust funding for NIH, provide funding to match CDC's increased responsibilities in global health and global health security, and support funding that allows BARDA to continue critical work in emerging and neglected infectious diseases. This means to rejecting cuts to global health, medical research, and global health security programs called for by the Administration in FY17 and FY18, and supporting at minimum sustained funding at FY16 levels for the NIH (including NIAID, NCATS, the Office of AIDS Research, and the Fogarty International Center), CDC's Center for Global Health and National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, and BARDA.

The United States has long played a leading role in research and innovation for new technologies to combat global health challenges. Global health R&D at HHS has yielded such results as the first blood test for HIV/AIDS, rapid diagnostics for the plague and rabies, and accelerated translation of basic research to product development for diseases of public health importance. It is critical to sustain and build on this leadership: More than 80 percent of Americans say that it is important for the United States to work to improve health globally through R&D.

In addition, as our world becomes more interconnected, it is clear that global health R&D provides direct benefits to US citizens, and that the health of Americans is dependent on the health of populations abroad. Evidenced by the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa and the recent Zika outbreak, health crises abroad can become health crises at home, and protecting the well-being of Americans requires a globally-focused approach. Today's investments in global health innovations to prevent and treat diseases in the developing world such as extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis, malaria, and NTDs will mean millions of future lives saved and are critical to global health security. Many diseases are only a plane ride away, or in some instances, reoccurring in the United States; it is therefore critical to our nation's public health that we work to combat these deadly diseases.

National Institutes of Health

The **NIH** carries out a wide variety of global health research activities—through the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the Office of AIDS Research, the Fogarty International Center, and the National Center for Accelerating Translational Science—that make the United States a leader in research globally. **Recent NIH global health research activities include:**

- Supporting studies in the search for new HIV/AIDS interventions, including evidence that certain HIV/AIDS treatments can also prevent the transmission of the HIV virus.
- Participating in the basic research that led to the development of the first-ever microbicide gel effective in preventing HIV/AIDS.
- Conducting basic and preclinical research that provides the foundation for new product discovery and development and supporting and conducting early stage clinical trials of promising products.
- Developing the in-country research capacity of developing world partners. The Fogarty International Center supports global health research at more than 100 US universities and research centers around the world.
- Developing tools to combat neglected diseases, including vaccines for dengue fever, schistosomiasis, and trachoma, as well as new drugs to treat malaria and tuberculosis.
- Contributing to the clinical evaluation of new treatment and prevention strategies for neglected diseases, including coordinating the Tuberculosis Trials Consortium—a global collaboration of researchers from CDC, domestic and international public health departments, academic medical centers, and Veterans Administration medical centers.

We recognize and are grateful for Congress' work to bolster funding for the critical programs supported by NIH. To deliver on the remarkable progress being made across the institutes, it is vital that we renew this commitment to health research. We particularly stress the role of the Fogarty International Center,

which has been eliminated in the President's FY18 Budget proposal despite its tremendous contributions to HIV/AIDS, TB, and other neglected infectious diseases research. Focusing on the earliest stages of global health R&D, NIH research— across the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the Office of AIDS Research, the Fogarty International Center, the National Center for Accelerating Translational Science, and other institutes—is imperative for ensuring that lifesaving products progress to later stages of development and ultimately become available to the communities who need them.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The **CDC** also makes significant contributions to global health, leading global disease surveillance, capacity building, and research in the development of new tools and technologies. The CDC's ability to investigate and respond to disease outbreaks, such as the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, is essential to protecting citizens both at home and abroad. The work of its scientists has led to major advances against devastating diseases, including the eradication of smallpox and early identification of HIV/AIDS. **CDC continues to make an impact on global health through critical research activities, including:**

- Monitoring and tracking infectious diseases worldwide.
- Providing critical intelligence needed to effectively implement control and prevention programs for infectious diseases.
- Alerting researchers when new trends or disease strains emerge, so that R&D efforts can intensify.
- Monitoring diseases domestically to make the public aware of an emergence of an infectious disease from abroad.
- Training epidemiologists in low and middle-income countries on how to detect and rapidly respond to infectious disease outbreaks.
- Developing diagnostic tools to accurately identify global diseases, including the bubonic plague, rabies, and Ebola.

Within the CDC, the Center for Global Health (CGH) and National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID) are critical to global health R&D and global health security efforts. Important work at NCEZID includes the development of innovative technologies to provide a rapid diagnostic test for the Ebola virus, a new vaccine to improve rabies control, and a new and more accurate diagnostic test for dengue virus. The center also plays a leading role coordinating the National Strategy for Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria, focused on preventing, detecting, and controlling outbreaks of antibiotic resistant pathogens, such as drug-resistant tuberculosis.

Programs at CDC's Center for Global Health—including the Global HIV/AIDS, Global Immunization, Parasitic Diseases and Malaria, Global Disease Detection and Emergency Response, and Global Public Health Capacity Development programs—have also yielded tremendous results in the development and refinement of vaccines, drugs, microbicides, and other tools to combat HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and lesser known diseases like leishmaniasis, dengue fever, and schistosomiasis. In addition, the Center for Global Health plays a critical role in detecting, preventing, and responding to infectious disease threats—

monitoring and responding to outbreaks, developing new tools to help detection efforts, training epidemiologists in high-burden regions, and building capacity of health systems to manage and respond to health threats around the globe.

CDC's work in novel technology development and global health security has significantly expanded due to the increasing frequency of global disease epidemics and engagement from the international community on a coordinated Global Health Security Agenda. This increased responsibility has not been matched with increased funding. As threats multiply, this will jeopardize the Center for Global Health's operations, scale-back important programming, and ultimately put American health at risk. While we recognize the realities of our constrained funding environment, we feel CDC's critical and unparalleled work in global health warrants attention. To-date, CDC's multi-year work on the Global Health Security Agenda has not received any independent appropriations. We urge the Committee to support all of CDC's important global health work with appropriate resources, which means at minimum level funding for CGH and NCEZID.

BARDA

Within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) at HHS, the Biological Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) also plays an unmatched role in global health R&D by providing an integrated, systematic approach to the development and purchase of the necessary vaccines, drugs, therapies, and diagnostic tools for public health medical emergencies—both intentional and naturally occurring. While initially designed to support the development of medical countermeasures against bioterror threats, recently these functions have been used to accelerate the development of urgently needed countermeasures for Ebola and Zika. This support has shown tremendous impact: BARDA has advanced at least three Ebola vaccine candidates, at least six diagnostics for Zika, and at least five Zika vaccine candidates in under two years.

BARDA is unique within the US government because it fills a critical gap in medical product development, supporting translational research and helping bridge the “valley of death” between basic research and later stage development, carrying products all the way through to regulatory approval and manufacturing. Similar gaps in development exist for new global health technologies—where BARDA's support bridging basic and late-stage research could play a vital role accelerating the development of vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments for neglected and emerging infectious diseases that threaten global and American health.

We commend you for your ongoing support of BARDA's important programming and urge the Committee to consider a broader, more formalized role for the authority in the infectious disease space—including a establishing a permanent Emerging Infectious Diseases program, and supporting a role for BARDA in developing countermeasures for infectious diseases that threaten American and global health security including Ebola, Zika, and diseases facing antimicrobial resistance including tuberculosis.

In addition to bringing lifesaving tools to those who need them most, global health R&D is a smart economic investment for the United States. Investment in global health R&D drives job creation, spurs business activity, and benefits academic institutions: **89 cents of every US dollar spent on global health R&D goes directly to US-based researchers.**

We strongly recommend that you fund NIH, CDC, and BARDA as robustly as possible to uphold vital work in global health R&D and global health security. In a constrained budget environment, this means rejecting cuts to critical research and global health security programs, and at minimum no less than sustained funding at FY16 levels for the NIH (including NIAID, NCATS, the Office of AIDS Research, and the Fogarty International Center), CDC's Center for Global Health and National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases, and BARDA.

We stand ready to work with you to advance US leadership in global health innovation, and ask that support for global health R&D not come at the expense of other humanitarian assistance and development accounts. Now more than ever, Congress must make smart budget decisions. Global health research that improves the lives of people around the world—while at the same time supporting US interests, creating jobs, and spurring economic growth at home—is a win-win.

Please do not hesitate to contact GHTC Director Jamie Bay Nishi at jnishi@ghtcoalition.org or (202) 540-4379, if you have questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene



AVAC





PATH



RESULTS



Sabin Vaccine Institute



Treatment Action Group



TB Alliance



Washington Global Health Alliance