GHTC
global health technologies coalition

advancing **innovation** to save lives

March 29, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
2306 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
2458 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
2413 Rayburn House 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 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) 2019.

**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 dedicated funding that allows BARDA to prioritize critical work in emerging infectious diseases. This means rejecting cuts to global health, medical research, and global health security programs called for by the Administration in FY19, and supporting at minimum sustained funding at FY18 levels for the NIH (including NIAID, NCATS, the Office of AIDS Research, and the Fogarty International Center), CDC's Center for Global Health (CGH) and National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), 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. 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, tracking, and responding to 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 only been supported with one-time supplemental funding, not sustainable appropriations. As threats multiply, this will jeopardize the Center for Global Health's operations, scale-back important programming, and ultimately put American health at risk. GHTC urges the Committee dedicate new, targeted resources to continue Global Health Security Agenda work and maintain all global health security activities—achieved through funding the CDC Global Health Protection line at a minimum of $208.2 million. Funding for global health security should not come at the expense of other vital global health activities at CDC, and we support appropriations for CDC CGH and NCEZID at no less than FY18 levels.

**BARDA**

BARDA plays an unmatched role in global health R&D by providing an integrated, systematic approach to the development and purchase of critical vaccines, diagnostics, drugs, and other tools for public health emergencies. By leveraging unique contracting authorities and targeted incentive mechanisms, BARDA partners with diverse stakeholders from industry, academia, and nonprofits to bridge the "valley of death" between basic research and advanced-stage product development for medical countermeasures—an area where more traditional US government research enterprises do not operate.

With these unique assets, BARDA has played a vital role in the development of urgently needed countermeasures for emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) like Ebola and Zika, developing at least three Ebola vaccine candidates, at least six diagnostics for Zika, and at least five Zika vaccine candidates in under two years. EIDs are emerging at a rapid rate and continue to pose significant risks to American health and public health preparedness. To date, BARDA's work in advancing tools to protect against the threat of EIDs has been funded through emergency funding. To ensure the continuation of this critical work and forward-looking investments, GHTC supports the creation of a separate line item for EIDs within BARDA, with an authorization at a minimum of $300 million, as well as fully fund BARDA at $700 million.

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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 FY18 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,

Aeras

American Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene

AVAC

Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative*

Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

Global Health Council

Global Health Technologies Coalition

HarvestPlus


International AIDS Vaccine Initiative


Infectious Diseases Society of America


International Partnership for Microbicides


PATH


Population Council


RESULTS


Treatment Action Group


TB Alliance


Washington Global Health Alliance