

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Lowey, and Chairwoman Granger,

Thank you for your ongoing leadership in balancing limited resources while addressing our nation's highest priorities in this challenging fiscal climate. We share your interest in preserving effective evidence-based and poverty-focused foreign aid that saves lives and creates economic stability in developing countries, and appreciate all of your work last year to continue to provide substantial support for Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and Nutrition efforts. As you begin to craft the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2017, we strongly urge you to allocate robust funding for MCH – including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and Nutrition in Global Health.

These investments in MCH and nutrition build the foundation for the U.S. goal of ending preventable maternal and child deaths in a generation globally. The June 2014 launch of USAID's Acting on the Call: Ending Preventable Maternal and Child Deaths report provided benchmark targets for that goal and an evidence-based roadmap to save an additional 15 million child lives and 600,000 women's lives by the year 2020. There is consensus among scientists and global health experts that this is possible. But achieving this bold goal requires Congressional support for critical child survival and nutrition programs.

Thanks to strong U.S. leadership, and close collaboration with partner countries, we are seeing real and measurable progress. The annual number of under-five deaths has drastically fallen from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5.9 million in 2014. Additionally, in the 24 countries where U.S. involvement has been the greatest, maternal mortality has declined an average of 5 percent each year, faster than the global average.

While great strides have been made to increase maternal, newborn and child health, the world is not yet on track to meet the goal of ending preventable maternal and child deaths within a generation globally. Each day, approximately 800 women, almost entirely from developing countries, die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Additionally, each day, over 16,000 children under five die of preventable and treatable conditions such as prematurity, pneumonia and diarrhea — with malnutrition being the underlying cause in 45 percent of those deaths. Newborn deaths are also a growing proportion of child mortality with one million children dying on the day they are born. Moreover, when a mother dies, her children are less

likely to go to school, get immunized, and have access to good nutrition, and they are up to 10 times more likely to die in childhood than children whose mothers are alive.

Our nation's MCH and Nutrition programs allow for the delivery of low cost, life-saving services for newborns, children, and mothers throughout the developing world. These programs provide access to skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care; training for frontline health workers; access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation, and hygiene; life-saving health commodities; and research and development of new lifesaving tools.

These accounts also support Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; global polio eradication and measles elimination efforts; and nutrition-specific programs for women and children, especially in the 1,000 days between pregnancy and a child's second birthday. By preventing disease and improving nutrition, these programs can make a tremendous impact on children's ability to learn and later secure employment and provide for their families as adults.

Funding for maternal and child health is among the most cost-effective, life-saving investments the U.S. can make. We applaud your leadership and urge you to continue strong support for these programs. It is vital to make robust investments while maintaining other critical humanitarian and development programs that support the well-being of women, newborns, and children to reach our shared goal of ending preventable child deaths globally. We look forward to working with you to help the United States maintain its leadership in this global effort.

Sincerely,



DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress



BETTY McCOLLUM
Member of Congress



MICHAEL McCAUL
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



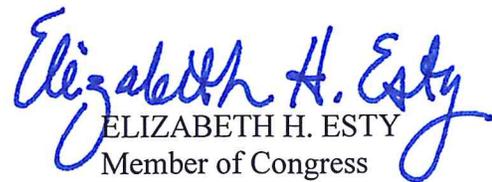
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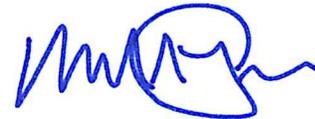
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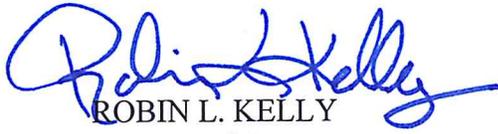
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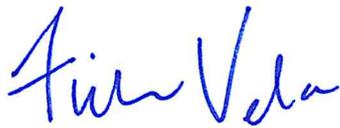
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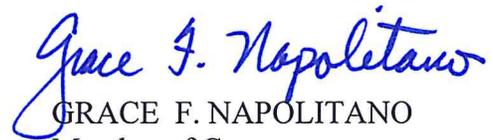
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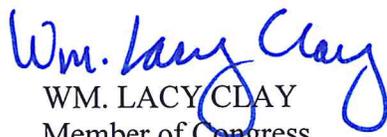
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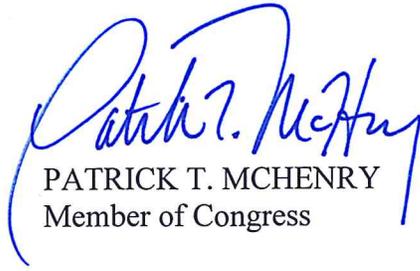
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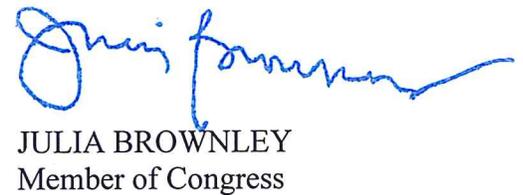
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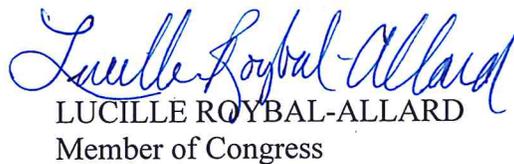
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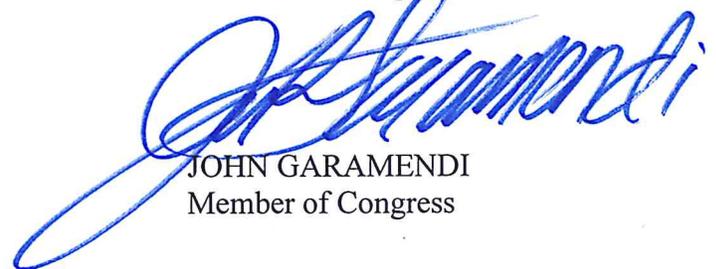
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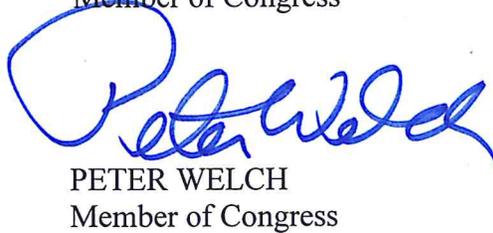
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