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**ECONOMIC GROWTH A PRIORITY FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
BIPARTISAN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**
*VEGA applauds introduction of the Economic Growth and Development Act, launch of the
Congressional Caucus on Effective Foreign Assistance, nomination of Ambassador Mark
Green for top USAID post*

Washington, D.C. — On behalf of our 29 Member NGOs and the millions of Americans they represent, the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) commends bipartisan champions in Congress and the Trump administration for signaling that economic growth will be a priority in modernizing U.S. foreign assistance.

Yesterday, Sens. Johnny Isakson (R.-Ga.), Chris Coons (D.-Del.) and David Perdue (R.-Ga.) re-introduced the Economic Growth and Development Act (EGDA, S. 1274), while Reps. Ted Yoho (R.-Fla.) and Adam Smith (D.-Wash.) introduced companion legislation in the House (H.R. 2747) along with cosponsors Adam Kinzinger (R.-Ill.), Jared Polis (D.-Colo.), Bobby Rush (D.-Ill.), Keith Ellison (D.-Minn.) and Tom Rooney (R.-Fla.).

The introduction of EGDA follows the recent re-launch of the Congressional Caucus on Effective Foreign Assistance with an emphasis on economic growth as a driver of effective global development. In addition, Ambassador Mark Green was recently nominated to head the U.S. Agency for International Development—a strong signal that economic growth will be a priority for the agency as it undergoes a possible reorganization.

“We are very pleased to support efforts in Congress and the Trump administration to prioritize economic growth and public-private partnerships in U.S. global development,” stated Michael Deal, president and CEO, VEGA. “We urge these champions for effective foreign assistance to also prioritize utilizing highly skilled volunteers to tap the generous skills and spirit of the American people in the most cost-effective way.”

The EGDA seeks to effectively leverage the capabilities, experience and resources of the private sector by making it easier for companies to access and work with U.S. development agencies. VEGA supports this effort, and likewise seeks to strengthen the alignment and coordination between the public and private sectors—including private American citizens and NGOs.

“For years, VEGA has leveraged pro-bono American private-sector expertise in partnership with the U.S. government. We look forward to strongly supporting the efforts of the co-sponsors to strengthen the role of highly skilled volunteers and NGOs in public-private partnerships for more prosperity and security at home and around the globe,” said Mr. Deal.

VEGA also supports Sens. Isakson and Coons as co-chairs of the recently re-launched Congressional Caucus for Effective Foreign Assistance in the Senate, as well as Reps. Yoho and Smith as co-chairs of the of the Caucus in the House, which now has 16 bipartisan members.

VEGA also endorses the nomination of former member of Congress and Ambassador to Tanzania Mark Green for Administrator of USAID. As the former head of the International Republican Institute, the Initiative for Global Development and the Consensus for Development Reform, Ambassador Green has long been a thought

leader and advocate for modernizing foreign assistance and effective economic growth. VEGA expects that he will continue to be a leader of strategic reform and U.S. investments in spurring economic growth.

Mr. Deal added:

“VEGA looks forward to continuing to collaborate and support efforts to prioritize prosperity-generating programs for effective U.S. foreign assistance—including by investing in global development. While efficiencies and cost-savings can certainly be implemented, the less than one percent of the U.S. budget that is spent on international affairs yields a great return on investment for American interests and should be increased—not cut—in order to truly put America first.”

Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) is a consortium of 29 member NGOs that generate more prosperity through partnerships that bring together highly skilled volunteers with people around the globe seeking opportunities for self-reliance. Since 2004, VEGA has partnered with the U.S. government on 59 economic growth programs in 47 countries, saving more than \$32 million taxpayer dollars and nearly doubling the program value through cost share and leverage, including more than 44,000 days of volunteer service.

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