



The largest alliance of U.S.-based international nongovernmental organizations focused on the world's poor and most vulnerable people.

November 9, 2017

Dear Members of the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee:

As members and partners of InterAction, an alliance of over 180 nongovernmental organizations working around the world, we write to thank you for your efforts to support programs that serve the world's poor and vulnerable through Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriation bills. As you prepare your final FY18 appropriations package, we urge to you adopt the highest possible funding levels for bilateral and multilateral poverty-fighting and lifesaving programs.

Investments in development, health, and humanitarian programs contribute immensely to U.S. national interests and fulfill America's deepest moral values. At less than 1% of the total U.S. budget, these programs build self-reliance; fight global diseases; improve maternal and child health and nutrition; help smallholder farmers; educate children; provide access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene; support democracy and good governance; foster equitable growth; advance gender equality; strengthen civil society; empower women and girls; meet the urgent needs of people affected by natural disasters and conflict-driven emergencies; and protect all people from violence, exploitation, and trafficking.

We greatly appreciate this year's House and Senate report language to advance country ownership, improve sustainability, advance pandemic preparedness, and expand transparency, as well as Senate report language regarding a policy for the use of skilled U.S. and local volunteers.

To preserve U.S. global leadership and engagement, we ask House conferees to support the higher Senate levels for Global Health Programs, Development Assistance, Economic Support Fund, Millennium Challenge Corporation, International Organizations and Programs, International Development Association, Migration and Refugee Assistance, International Disaster Assistance, Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance, Peacekeeping Operations, and USAID Operating Expenses. We ask both House and Senate

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Transnational NGO Initiative

David Weiss
Global Communities

Jeff Whisenant
ReSurge International



conferes to fund UN peacekeeping through the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities account at the full assessed rate.

Within these accounts, we urge retaining the higher House level for basic education, and the higher Senate levels for maternal and child health and for family planning and reproductive health.

In addition to these funding levels, we request that the following sections of the Senate bill be carried into the final bill:

- Sec. 7028(c) extending the authority to limit competition to local entities under certain circumstances.
- Sec. 7031(e) promoting transparency and accountability in natural resource extraction.
- Sec. 7034(m) making funds available for the regular collection of feedback obtained directly from beneficiaries on the quality and relevance of development and humanitarian assistance.
- Sec. 7034(p) making funds available for the Local Sustainability Awards Program.
- Sec. 7041(i)(2) allowing funds that are made available for Syria to be used to strengthen the capability of Syrian civil society organizations to address the immediate and long-term needs of the Syrian people.
- Sec. 7069(a) requiring a National Diplomacy and Development Strategy, as well as sec. 7069(b), mandating an update to the 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. However, we request that you specify that these strategies and reviews be developed in broad consultation with stakeholders, and be made public immediately and in full.
- Sec. 7077(a) requiring that reports to the Committees on Appropriations be publicly posted unless the head of the relevant agency determines that the posting is not in the national interest. Currently, such reports must be publicly posted only if the head of the relevant agency affirmatively determines that the posting is in the national interest.
- Sec. 7083 placing limitations on the reorganization or redesign of the State Department and USAID, as well as requiring notification and reporting prior to implementation. We urge that this provision be strengthened by requiring broader consultation and greater transparency, including with authorizing committees and the public.



We greatly appreciate your consideration of our views, and look forward to working with you and your staff to make the world a more peaceful, just and prosperous place.

Sincerely,

Action Against Hunger

Alliance for Peacebuilding

Basic Education Coalition

CARE USA

Center for Health and Gender Equity

Global Health Council

Heartland Alliance International

Helen Keller International

International Center for Research on Women

International Medical Corps

IntraHealth International

Islamic Relief USA

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA

Mercy-USA for Aid and Development

Norwegian Refugee Council

ONE

Oxfam

PAI

Pathfinder International

Planned Parenthood Federation of America



Refugees International

Save the Children

The Hunger Project

U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance