

OPEN LETTER FROM FAITH ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR EXPANDING BASE FOREIGN AID FUNDING IN THE FY2024 SFOPS BILL

March 29, 2023

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs Murray and Granger and Ranking Members Collins and DeLauro:

As a multifaith group of 20 organizations committed to saving lives and advancing the dignity of vulnerable and marginalized people around the world, we urge your support for strong U.S. investments in international humanitarian, poverty-focused development assistance, and peacebuilding programs. These programs alleviate suffering as they increase food and water security, economic development opportunities, and global health; they support human rights, democracy and good governance, while addressing complex emergencies and conflict.

U.S. government leadership, funding and technical assistance could not be more vital as the compounding impacts of food and fertilizer price spikes triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine further exacerbate hunger and insecurity, climate change impacts more people, and fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Other conflicts and crises such as those in Myanmar, Sudan, and Haiti have also worsened over this past year. Your support for robust foreign assistance funding is critical to meeting the needs we faith organizations see on-the-ground every day.

As you negotiate funding allocations for fiscal year 2024, we urge you to support **at least \$72.9 billion for the 302(b) topline of the State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs bill**. For less than one percent of the federal budget, this bill funds critical humanitarian and poverty-focused programs that provide a strong return on investment to the U.S. taxpayer by helping create a healthier and more secure world, increase markets for U.S. goods and services, and generate goodwill toward the U.S.

Importantly, strong and consistent funding of the base bill allows for project implementing organizations to plan effective and sustainable programs and partnerships to address poverty, conflict, and disease. Last year, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition identified [\\$14 billion](#) in additional need to support U.S. economic, health, and national security interests; mitigate the global health and humanitarian impacts of the pandemic that include key investments in pandemic preparedness, responding to global health and humanitarian crises; bolster American economic competitiveness, and help countries on their journey to self-reliance. This recommendation was issued before the Russian invasion of Ukraine which has added further stress on fragile economies worldwide.

Using primarily privately generated resources, faith-based organizations work around the world to assist the most vulnerable. But we cannot do this work alone. We cannot match the scope and scale of U.S. government support in these crises. As a result, the partnership of the U.S. government is crucial. For decades, faith-based organizations have worked side-by-side with U.S. government-funded

projects, exemplifying public-private cooperation at its best, with the shared goal of ending hunger and poverty, and building peace worldwide.

Helping our neighbors—at home and abroad—in times of crisis, has long been a core American value. We urge you to exemplify this spirit with a robust 302(b) allocation to SFOPs bill in FY24. In so doing, Congress will show its continued support for U.S. global leadership, saving lives and building a world of peace and prosperity for all. We stand ready to work with you as you discern the nation's priorities for FY 2024.

CC:

The Honorable Mario Díaz-Balart

The Honorable Chris Coons

The Honorable Barbara Lee

The Honorable Lindsey Graham

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee

American Jewish World Service

Bread for the World

Christian Connections for International Health

Corus International

Disabled Children's Fund

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Faiths for Safe Water

Food for the Hungry

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Helping Hand for Relief and Development

Islamic Relief USA

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Sojourners

The Episcopal Church

The United Methodist Church -- General Board of Church and Society

Union for Reform Judaism

United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries

World Vision