

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Vice Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cole, Chair Collins, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Vice Chair Murray,

As members of the non-governmental community working to support the poorest and most marginalized populations on the planet, we are writing to call urgently for your leadership in protecting the U.S. Agency for International Development and the overall budget function<sup>150</sup> for international Affairs.

The White House and the Department for Government Efficiency (DOGE) have rapidly dismantled USAID in the span of weeks. They have fired development professionals with decades of experience, frozen already appropriated funding for critical programs and thrown the global community into chaos. These actions are illegal and cruel. They have usurped the power of the legislative branch and are already causing the preventable suffering and increasing risk of death of millions of the most vulnerable people in the world, including children.

We urge you to push back forcefully and quickly against this shortsighted and ill-considered action on the part of the White House. The fraction of the budget that the U.S. invests in foreign aid has an outsized positive impact and is good for America and Americans. Foreign aid promotes international trade, boosts goodwill for our nation, enhances our security, and benefits our economy. It is also seen by top U.S. military leaders as a key strategy for reducing the need for U.S. intervention overseas. Further, dismantling USAID will leave tens of thousands of Americans without jobs, thereby harming our domestic economy at a time when inflation is already causing strain on U.S. families.

Decades of U.S. global leadership is being lost. U.S. foreign aid for children has been especially effective and yet most of it is outside of the waivers provided by the administration. Even when limited waivers have been provided, the funding has yet to be made available and the staff to implement them are no longer there. For example, thanks in great part to the United States'

foreign assistance, preventable deaths globally of children under five have been slashed from over 12 million a year in 1990 to roughly 5 million today. In addition, 11.7 million pregnant women and young children's lives have been saved from malaria and 6.6 million orphans and vulnerable children and their caregivers have been protected from the worst aspects of HIV/AIDS. These successes have been achieved with just 0.09% of our federal budget and they have nearly all been frozen. At the time of this writing, maternal and child health, nutrition, malaria, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases, clean water, child protection and basic education programs have largely all been halted.

We strongly urge the reassertion of your leadership and ask that you protect the U.S. Agency for International Development and reject any recommendations to cut or eliminate foreign assistance which so effectively enhances our influence and authority in the world community.

Very Sincerely,