

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 11, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Leahy and Vice Chairman Shelby:

In the midst of an historic global pandemic, we write to urge strong Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding for the International Affairs Budget. Our investments in the key development and diplomatic programs in this budget account are critical to ensuring the health, safety, and economic interests of the American people.

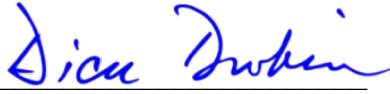
The international community is currently facing an unprecedented number of global challenges—including confrontational adversaries, failed states and resulting instability, humanitarian crises, mass displacement, and democratic backsliding. American investments in diplomacy and development help prevent and reverse these trends, saving lives, building alliances, and opening markets for American goods. Often such investments reduce the need to send American troops into harm's way and protect Americans at home from threats that do not respect international borders, as made clear with the historic COVID-19 pandemic.

Most importantly, strong FY 2022 foreign assistance funding will be critical to addressing this ongoing pandemic. To date, nearly 125 million cases and 2.8 million deaths have been tracked globally, with exact figures likely much higher due to underreporting. COVID-19 has particularly hit poor and vulnerable countries the hardest, threatening decades of hard-won gains, straining already fragile health systems, and exacerbating inequalities, particularly for women and girls. In fact, an estimated 200 million more people are likely to be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 due to the severe long-term impact of the pandemic, reversing 20 years of progress. And with poorer nations largely shut out of early access to COVID-19 vaccines, such gaps threaten to prolong the pandemic and undermine our progress at home (some forecasts indicate that at the current rate, it will take until 2024 for most poor nations to achieve mass COVID-19 immunization). A robust FY 2022 International Affairs Budget can help not only support more equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics around the world, but also strengthen health infrastructures, shore up food assistance programs, and provide other life-saving aid to those in need.

America's strength comes not only from its military and economic might, but from the power of its ideas and values. We have a long history of bipartisan support for generously helping lift the lives of those abroad, utilizing one percent of the annual federal budget in a smart and strategic way that literally saves lives. As former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said, "For the United States, supporting international development is more than just an expression of our compassion. It is a vital investment in the free, prosperous, and peaceful international order that fundamentally serves our national interest."

We urge you to ensure robust funding for the FY 2022 International Affairs Budget and look forward to working with you as we strive to reach that free, prosperous, and peaceful international order.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator

/S/ Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/S/ Thom Tillis
United States Senator

/S/ Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/S/ Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

/S/ Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

/S/ Kevin Cramer
United States Senator

/S/ Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/S/ Dan Sullivan
United States Senator

/S/ Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/S/ Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

/S/ Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/S/ Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/S/ Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/S/ Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

/S/ Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/S/ Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

/S/ Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

/S/ Jack Reed
United States Senator

/S/ Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/S/ Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

/S/ Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/S/ Tina Smith
United States Senator

/S/ Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

/S/ Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

/S/ Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/S/ Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

/S/ Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

/S/ Brian Schatz
United States Senator

/S/ Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

/S/ Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

/S/ Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/S/ Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/S/ Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

/S/ Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/S/ Catherine Cortez-Masto
United States Senator

/S/ Mazie Hirono
United States Senator

/S/ Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/S/ Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/S/ Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

/S/ Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/S/ Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/S/ Jon Tester
United States Senator

/S/ Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator

/S/ Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

/S/ John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

/S/ Mark Kelly
United States Senator

/S/ Alex Padilla
United States Senator