

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 30, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
122 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Leahy:

We write to reiterate our strong bipartisan support for robust funding for the Fiscal Year 2019 International Affairs Budget. This budget funds strategic tools that are essential to protecting our national security, building economic prosperity, alleviating humanitarian crises, supporting democratic principles, and demonstrating American values. At a time when we face multiple national security challenges around the world, we continue to believe that deep cuts to the International Affairs Budget would be misguided and even dangerous.

Today's national security challenges require the United States to utilize a full range of non-military tools to ensure our nation's safety. The diplomatic and development capabilities funded through the International Affairs Budget can help avert conflict, shorten its duration, and prevent its return. Fewer and shorter conflicts mean fewer American servicemembers in harm's way and greater security for the American people.

That is why Republican and Democratic national security and foreign policy experts have long championed a robust International Affairs Budget as a key component of our national security. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford have repeatedly emphasized the importance of our nation's diplomatic and development capabilities. In February 2018, more than 150 retired generals and admirals called for an "International Affairs Budget that keeps pace with the growing threats we face." In a separate letter, a group of over 1,200 veterans from all 50 states and every branch of the military described how their service in uniform has convinced them that "diplomacy and development are critical tools alongside the military to keep America safe."

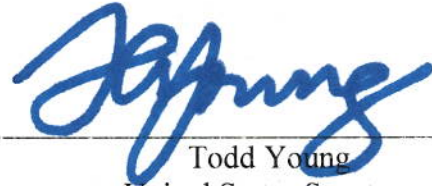
In addition to its benefits to our national security, the International Affairs Budget also facilitates international economic development and builds trading partners—generating economic growth and jobs here at home. The International Affairs Budget also alleviates humanitarian crises, helping millions of people who confront food insecurity and starvation. During a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing on March 14, 2018, retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General John Castellaw put it succinctly noting that, "food crises...grow terrorists."

There is no question that we must conduct assertive oversight, scrutinize the value of every program, and eliminate waste and inefficiency—including within the International Affairs Budget. However, deep cuts to the International Affairs Budget would undermine our country's economic and national security interests, as well as the humanitarian and democratic principles we support. For these reasons, we urge you to ensure that Congress supports robust funding for the Fiscal Year 2019 International Affairs Budget.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Todd Young  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



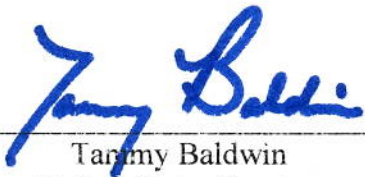
Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



Maggie Hassan  
United States Senator



M. Michael Rounds  
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator



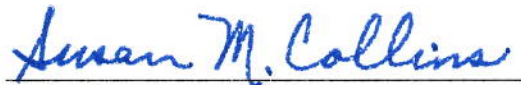
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



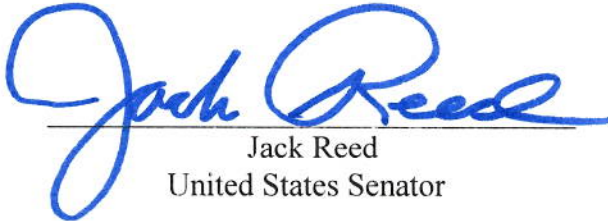
Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator




Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



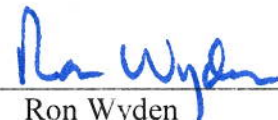
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



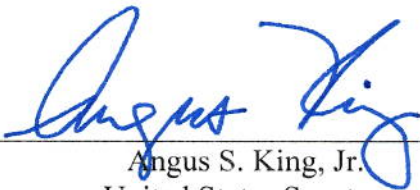
Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator



Bill Nelson  
United States Senator



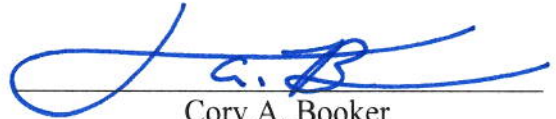
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



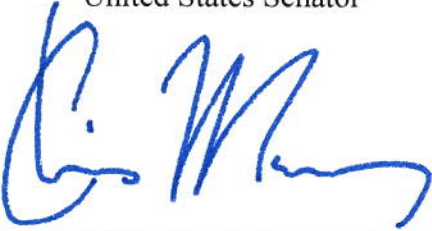
Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



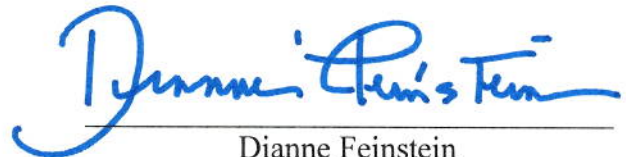
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Kamala Harris  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



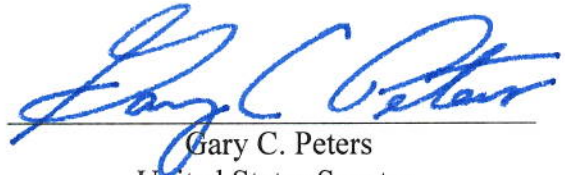
Heidi Heitkamp  
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Tom Udall  
United States Senator