

July 9, 2009

The Honorable Don Payne
Chairman
Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Don Young
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Payne and Congressman Young:

The undersigned organizations wish to thank you for your leadership in circulating the recent "Dear Colleague" letter to Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger in support of increased funding for the global fight against tuberculosis (TB). We appreciate your recognition of the urgent need to strengthen efforts to treat this disease and to discover new drugs, diagnostics and vaccines to lead to its eventual elimination. Your letter clearly had a positive impact, as the House Appropriations Committee subsequently took action to increase funding for this important work.

As you know, over nine million people are diagnosed each year with TB, and 1.8 million people die from the disease annually. TB is the leading cause of death of people infected with HIV/AIDS, as well as of women of childbearing age. Drug-resistant strains of TB have been detected in ever-growing numbers, including here in the United States. TB wreaks significant economic damage on families, communities, indigenous populations and countries already burdened by poverty. Expanded U.S. support is vital to halting this devastation, as well as protecting existing U.S. investment in global HIV/AIDS programs, whose success is threatened when people whose lives have been prolonged by U.S.-funded antiretroviral medications are cut short by undiagnosed, untreated tuberculosis.

We are grateful for your commitment to combating TB and we particularly want to compliment the work of Noelle Lusane and Jason Suslavich for their efforts on this letter as well.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to continue to make the fight against TB a national and global priority. Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation
AIDS Institute
American Lung Association

American Public Health Association
American Thoracic Society
Association for Public Health Laboratories
Eli Lilly and Company
Infectious Diseases Society of America
RESULTS
Stop TB USA
TB Alliance
Treatment Action Group