

**OPEN LETTER FROM 34 FAITH ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESSING SUPPORT TO PROTECT BASE  
AND OCO LEVELS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 SFOPS BILL**

*April 26, 2018*

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Frelinghuysen and Ranking Members Leahy and Lowey:

As national faith communities and faith-based organizations, we write to you to express our appreciation for the bi-partisan support for the FY18 International Affairs Budget, particularly for programs that work to alleviate suffering for people living in extreme poverty. Due to our commitment to saving lives and advancing the dignity of vulnerable and marginalized persons and communities across the world, we respectfully request that you support a strong 302(b) allocation of **\$57.4 billion or higher** for the FY19 *State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill*. These U.S. investments in international humanitarian and poverty-focused assistance, as well as peace-building programs, have been essential in helping to alleviate suffering from hunger, extreme poverty, debilitating illness, complex emergencies and violent conflict.

The small, but significant, increases from the previous fiscal year to accounts for Maternal and Child Health, Development Assistance, Food for Peace, and McGovern-Dole, will have a real and substantial impact on millions of human lives. Furthermore, the majority of all poverty-focused development assistance accounts sustained funds at FY17 enacted levels, ensuring that implementing organizations can plan programs effectively and build mutually beneficial partnerships to successfully combat poverty, violent conflict, and disease.

As you start to consider 302(b) funding allocations for FY19, we urge you to support a strong topline for the State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. This \$57.4 billion allocation is consistent with enacted funding levels from fiscal year 2017. We ask that this funding not come at the expense of other poverty-focused development, global health, humanitarian and peace building programs. Critical humanitarian and poverty-focused programs provide strong return on investment to the U.S. taxpayer, helping create a healthier world for everyone, and generating goodwill toward the United States.

Specifically, we request no less than:

- **\$8.72 billion for total Global Health Programs, specifically \$3.05 billion for USAID Global Health and \$5.67 billion for State Global Health**

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- **\$4.4 billion for International Disaster Assistance**
- **\$3 billion for Development Assistance, specifically \$1 billion for Feed the Future**
- **\$3.6 billion for Migration and Refugee Assistance**
- **\$50 million for Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance**
- **\$30 million for the Complex Crises Fund**

We also request that you fund these critical programs within the Agriculture Appropriations bill:

- **\$1.7 billion for Food for Peace**
- **\$207 million for McGovern-Dole**

Using primarily privately generated resources, faith-based organizations are actively engaged around the world assisting those who are the least and the last in terms of material resources. We are doing our part, but we cannot do it alone. The partnership of the U.S. government is crucial. Helping the most vulnerable at home and abroad to help themselves is at the heart of the American character and essential to global human security.

We urge you to accelerate—not pull back from—the gains made in recent years. In so doing, Congress will make possible continued U.S. global leadership to save lives and build a world of peace and prosperity for all of God’s children. Recognizing the budget constraints in which you are working, we stand ready to work with you as you discern the nation’s priorities for 2019.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

1. Adventist Development and Relief Agency
2. American Hindu World Service
3. American Jewish World Service
4. Bread for the World
5. Children's Medical Ministries
6. Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
7. Church World Services
8. CMMB – Healthier Lives Worldwide
9. Conference of Major Superiors of Men
10. Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
11. Disabled Children's Fund
12. Disciples Center for Public Witness (Disciples of Christ)
13. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
14. Faiths for Safe Water
15. Food for the Hungry
16. IMA World Health
17. International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC)
18. Islamic Relief USA
19. Islamic Society of North America
20. Leadership Conference of Women Religious

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21. Lutheran World Relief
22. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
23. Mennonite Central Committee, U.S  
Washington DC Office
24. Missionary Oblates Justice, Peace &  
Integrity of Creation Office
25. National Advocacy Center of the Sisters  
of the Good Shepherd
26. Office of Social Justice: Christian  
Reformed Church
27. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
28. Progressive National Baptist  
Convention, Inc.
29. The Episcopal Church
30. The United Methodist Church, General  
Board of Church and Society
31. Union for Reform Judaism
32. United Church of Christ, Justice and  
Witness Ministries
33. World Relief
34. World Renew