December 5, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairwoman Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby,

The global AIDS investments by the United States are largely responsible for the unprecedented success seen in fighting HIV globally, but our work to control the pandemic is not over. The strong bipartisan support that has sustained the response so far is more critical now than ever to protect global health security and achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation.

We are writing in support of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and requesting that you continue critical and timely investments in these programs by maintaining a strong commitment to funding for Global AIDS. This level of support will maintain and build upon PEPFAR’s current success, and propel its Accelerating Children’s Treatment Initiative to double the number of children on life-saving medication by 300,000 worldwide, while greatly increasing support for prevention of mother to child transmission. A strong level of funding will enable PEPFAR to sustain its leading role in halting this deadly epidemic, while making important and lasting contributions to national health systems that safeguard against other emerging health crises.

Modeling studies show that immediate and rapid scale-up of “combination prevention” programs not only save more lives, but will ultimately save money by averting new HIV infections. The PARTNER study released this year showed conclusively that achieving undetectable viral load in HIV patients reduces the risk of transmission by more than 99%. Newer, more effective anti-HIV medications with fewer side effects and long acting formulations are in the research pipeline, and leaders like Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, have projected that “we can end the AIDS pandemic in the next 10 years.” To succeed, Congress must support a strong level of funding for PEPFAR in FY 15.

PEPFAR has been enormously effective, and together with the Global Fund, is starting to turn the tide on the world’s leading infectious disease killer, while also making critical health systems and workforce investments that help foster economic and political stability on a global scale. In this challenging budget environment, we believe that a sustained U.S investment in the fight against HIV is critical, and by maintaining a strong level of support for U.S. global HIV/AIDS activities for the coming fiscal year, we will save lives and resources in the long-term.

Sincerely,