

From: The Honorable Louise McIntosh Slaughter  
Sent By:  
Date: 3/16/2009

Save Women's Lives

Support International Family Planning Programs

DEADLINE: COB Friday March 27, 2009

\*This is a programmatic request\*

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in urging the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee to increase funding for international family planning programs. Women throughout the world lack proper reproductive health care, with devastating results.

Half a million women die from pregnancy and childbirth every year

50 percent of infant deaths are a result of inadequate maternal health and delivery care

95 percent of population growth occurs in poor countries straining economies, the environment, and social stability

With access to proper care, these deaths and strains are preventable. The U.S. supports family planning projects in more than fifty developing nations. Each year, these programs help prevent 60 million unplanned births, 105 million abortions and nearly 3 million infant deaths. Projects promote safe motherhood initiatives, combat sexual and gender-based violence, and prevent and treat HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, reducing the risk of mother to child transmission.

Investing in family planning will prevent maternal and child health problems across the globe while saving billions in taxpayers' dollars in the future. We urge you to join us in supporting increased funding for these critical programs.

For more information or to sign onto this letter, please contact by March 27th.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

Michael Michaud  
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

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Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger:

We respectfully request that you increase international family planning assistance funding by \$530 million from last year's level, including a total of \$65 million for the United Nations Population Fund in the Fiscal Year 2010 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Act. This increase will reverse a decade of inadequate funding and will prevent grave consequences for the health and well-being of women, children and families across the globe for generations.

Since 1995, international family planning funds have declined by 40 percent in real dollars while the number of women of reproductive age in the developing world has increased by 300 million. Today, 200 million women want but lack access to contraceptives, and this demand is projected to rise by 40 percent over the next 15 years. Our request represents the U.S. fair share of the amount necessary to address the existing unmet need for family planning. By doing so, more than 18 million additional women in the developing world would be able to use modern methods of contraception.

Inadequate funding for international family planning holds grave consequences for the health and well-being of women, families and communities across the globe. More than half a million women die from pregnancy related causes and childbirth complications every year. The vast majority of these preventable deaths occur in the poorest countries in the world where there are limited services to promote safe motherhood and a lack of basic health infrastructure. Further, 50 percent of infant deaths result from poor maternal health and inadequate safe delivery care. Family planning is paramount to turn the tide on maternal and infant mortality.

The direct and rippling positive impact of an investment in family planning is clear. Slowing the population's rapid growth will ease pressure on natural resources and decrease emissions that lead to global warming. Given the ability to control the size and spacing of their children, families' standards of living rise and communities are lifted out of cyclical poverty. Family planning encourages social stability in the developing world, which in turn, assures our national security. Access to reproductive health care and family planning is the hallmark in our effort to advance the rights and empowerment of women. All the while from a fiscal standpoint, we know an investment now in family planning holds real cost savings for the American taxpayers' in the future.

The U.S supports family planning projects in more than fifty developing nations. Each year, these programs help prevent 60 million unplanned births, 105 million abortions and nearly 3 million infant deaths. These projects promote safe motherhood initiatives, combat sexual and gender-based violence, and prevent and treat HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, reducing the risk of mother to child transmission.

For a healthier world and planet, we firmly support strengthening international family planning programs and urge you increase international family planning assistance by \$530 million, including a total of \$65 million for the United Nations Population Fund in the FY 2010 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. We appreciate your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

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Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress

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Michael Michaud  
Member of Congress

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Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress