

April 4, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Vice Chairwoman  
Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
State-Foreign Operations Subcommittee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Graham, and Vice Chairman Leahy:

As former colleagues, we write to relay our support for the International Affairs Budget and the important role development and diplomacy programs play in confronting the growing global challenges and advancing our interests throughout the world.

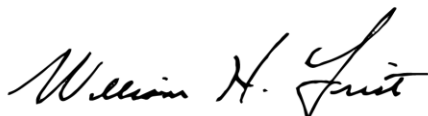
We appreciate the enormous decisions currently facing the Senate and understand that you continue to work under a constrained budget environment. However, today America faces unprecedented global challenges, including rapidly increasing humanitarian crises, while funding for International Affairs has been cut by 12% since FY10 when adjusted for inflation, and base funding has declined 30% in that same period.

Over the last six years, the world has changed dramatically—from the rise of ISIS and the historic refugee crisis in the Middle East, to Russia’s annexation of Crimea and aggression in Eastern Europe, to growing concerns of pandemic threats. We fear the United States is not keeping pace with these growing challenges and further cuts to International Affairs would only make it more difficult to respond to world events.

Strategic investments in development and diplomacy are crucial to advancing our national security and economic interests while ensuring a more secure and stable world. For just 1% of the federal budget, these programs are cost-effective investments that enable the United States to support allies like Israel and Jordan, respond to humanitarian crises, and promote U.S. interests abroad. To that end, we believe strongly that the International Affairs Budget is a critical component to our overall national security strategy and urge you to protect these programs from further cuts.

Thank you for your leadership in the Senate and your continued support for strategic investments in development and diplomacy programs.

Sincerely,



The Honorable William H. Frist  
Former Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
(January 1995 – January 2007)



The Honorable Thomas A. Daschle  
Former Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
(January 1987 – January 2005)



The Honorable George Allen  
United States Senate  
(January 2001 – January 2007)



The Honorable Bill Bradley  
United States Senate  
(January 1979 – January 1997)



The Honorable Norm Coleman  
United States Senate  
(January 2003 – January 2009)



The Honorable Gary Hart  
United States Senate  
(January 1975 – January 1987)



The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison  
United States Senate  
(June 1993 – January 2013)



The Honorable Robert W. Kasten, Jr.  
United States Senate  
(January 1981 – January 1993)



The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
United States Senate  
(January 1977 – January 2013)



The Honorable Connie Mack  
United States Senate  
(January 1989 – January 2001)



The Honorable Mel Martínez  
United States Senate  
(January 2005 – September 2009)



The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson  
United States Senate  
(January 2001 – January 2013)



The Honorable Sam Nunn  
United States Senate  
(January 1973 – January 1997)




The Honorable Charles S. Robb  
United States Senate  
(January 1989 – January 2001)



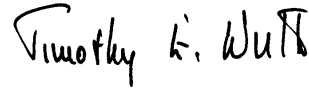
The Honorable Jim Sasser  
United States Senate  
(January 1977 – January 1995)



The Honorable Gordon Smith  
United States Senate  
(January 1997 – January 2009)



The Honorable John Warner  
United States Senate  
(January 1979 – January 2009)



The Honorable Timothy E. Wirth  
United States Senate  
(January 1987 – January 1993)

CC: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
The Honorable Harry Reid, Minority Leader