



February 24, 2021

Representative David Scott
Chairman
House Agriculture Committee
468 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Gregory Meeks
Chairman
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2310 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Glenn Thompson
Ranking Member
House Agriculture Committee
400 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Michael McCaul
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2440 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Scott and Meeks, and Ranking Members Thompson and McCaul,

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused global food insecurity to skyrocket. The number of people facing crisis levels of hunger is expected to double in the next year to 270 million. At least four countries are facing the looming prospect of famine. Covid-19 has exacerbated hunger and malnutrition globally.

According to recent projections, the COVID-19 pandemic could cause an additional 12 million children to become severely acutely malnourished. This number includes approximately 9.3 million additional cases of wasting, a life-threatening form of malnutrition in which children become dangerously thin and their chances of dying increase by up to 11 times.

We are grateful for the inclusion of \$11 billion in foreign assistance in President Biden's Covid-19 response proposal and the action that Congressional committees have already taken to make that a reality. **We urge Congress to ensure that food and nutrition security interventions remain a central component of U.S. foreign assistance supplemental funding.** We support the House Agriculture Committee's \$800 million for the Title II "Food for Peace" program and encourage relevant foreign affairs/relations committees to provide up to \$3 billion within the International Disaster Assistance account, with significant investment in the Emergency Food Security Program.

Food aid is important in times of crisis. This food aid should address the urgent needs of vulnerable populations including the special nutritional needs of malnourished children. This includes recognition of the unique challenge of wasting as a deadly secondary effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the need for focus on appropriate treatments.

Responding to both food insecurity and malnutrition are fundamental to successfully responding to the global pandemic, and foundational to our ability to build resilient communities to combat future crises. These international food assistance programs can help to prevent intergenerational losses in countries experiencing the worst food security impacts of Covid-19. They make economic and national security sense for the United States, helping to stop the spread of instability, reducing the need for more costly interventions down the road. Thank you for your continued support of these lifesaving programs that this truly unprecedented moment.

Best Regards,



Eric Mitchell
Executive Director
Alliance to End Hunger
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The Alliance to End Hunger engages diverse institutions to build the public and political will to end hunger at home and abroad. Our coalition of corporations, nonprofits, universities, foundations, individuals, and more work with their unique constituencies to raise the profile of the issues of hunger, nutrition, and agriculture to elected officials and broader stakeholders.