

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2020

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Defense of State,
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Senate Committee on Appropriations
127 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Department of State,
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy:

In this unprecedented time, it is imperative that the global community come together to fight the COVID-19 pandemic that has infected over 2.5 million people as it continues to spread. The novel coronavirus clearly knows no boundaries, infecting nearly every corner of the earth from higher developed countries to fragile states to countries embroiled in active conflicts. As the world focuses on efforts to slow infection rates, some governments are using the opportunity to pursue power grabs undermining democracy and governance, while non state actors are seizing opportunities created by the health crisis to advance their own agendas. Other states face collapse under the pandemic's economic effects – greater poverty, inability to service multilateral and bilateral debt, unemployment, and inequality.

It has never been clearer that global governance structures such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization are critically important. Therefore, we urge that the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee include in the fiscal year 2021 appropriations bill the funds necessary, and bill language requiring the Secretary to use such funds, to pay the full U.S. assessment for each international organization funded in the “Contributions to International Organizations” account.

As assessed contributions are required dues shared among member states to pay for the expenses of the organization, any withholding of assessed dues violates our treaty obligations and undermines coordinated responses by member states to the emerging political, humanitarian and economic crises erupting throughout the world. Such language would provide the multilateral institutions of which the U.S. is a member the funding predictability and stability needed to respond.

There is no doubt that multilateral institutions are imperfect. However, the greatest threats to human security, from pandemics to the climate crisis, are global in scope requiring the capability to coordinate across borders. We commend the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Appropriations Subcommittee for its strong support of multilateral organizations in the past, and look forward to working with the committee to ensure continued indispensable American leadership in addressing emerging global challenges.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/s/ Chris Van Hollen

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



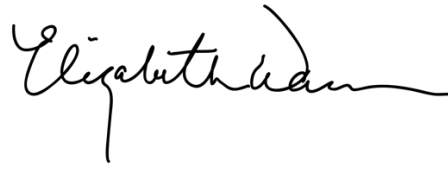
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

TIM Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator