

December 19, 2016

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President-Elect
United States of America

Dear President-Elect Trump:

As leaders within the U.S. Christian community, we write to offer our congratulations on your recent election victory and to offer our prayers for you and your transition team as you prepare to assume office at the beginning of next year.

Our faith calls on us to tend to the most vulnerable and afflicted, and we believe that our nation and our government have a responsibility to lead global efforts to combat extreme poverty and disease and to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Working alongside partners in local governments, donor agencies and secular non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations (FBO) provide unique capacity and credibility in our work overseas. We have seen highly effective implementation through Interfaith councils and the convening of educators, government ministers, business leaders, and various members of civil society. Faith based leaders enjoy the social standing, local acceptance, goodwill and credibility to bring together these groups necessary for large scale and systemic changes. In an effort to capitalize on these strengths, the Bush and Obama Administrations created the faith based and community outreach offices in the White House, USAID and State Department to build more systematic partnerships between government and the not-for-profit private sector. Therefore, we urge your Administration to maintain and expand the partnership with the faith community that has developed over the last 15 years.

While U.S. foreign assistance comprises less than 1 percent of the federal budget, programs such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Feed the Future, and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) have saved and improved the lives of tens of millions. For example, U.S. leadership has helped to cut in half global under-five child deaths over the last twenty-five years, and in the last ten years alone the U.S. has led efforts to provide AIDS treatment to more than 15 million patients and to reduce malaria deaths by 75 percent in many of the hardest hit countries.

U.S. foreign assistance programs enjoy strong bipartisan support in Congress and across Presidential Administrations. President George W. Bush created a lasting legacy through the creation of PEPFAR, PMI and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and President Obama continued and expanded upon the work of these.

As you build your foreign policy and national security teams and policy agendas, we urge you to prioritize and protect U.S. foreign assistance agencies and programs that represent a critical pillar of U.S. leadership in the world, and we call upon you to keep with our

deep faithful traditions of helping those most vulnerable around the world. As we are exhorted in Matthew 25, “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Our organizations and the broader faith community that we represent look forward to working with you and your Administration to advance U.S. leadership in global development and humanitarian assistance, and we assure you of our prayers as you lead our nation.

Sincerely,

Leith Anderson	President, National Association of Evangelicals	Washington, DC
Scott Arbeiter	President, World Relief	Baltimore, MD
Christine Caine	Founder, Propel Women	Costa Mesa, CA
Nick Caine	Co-Founder, A21	Costa Mesa, CA
Most Reverend Oscar Cantú	Chair, Committee on International Justice and Peace, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops	Washington, DC
Gary Edmonds	CEO, Food for the Hungry	Phoenix, AZ
Garrett Grigsby	Executive Director, Christian Connections for International Health	Sterling, VA
Chad Hayward	Accord Network	Washington, DC
Bill Hybels	Senior Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church	S. Barrington, IL
Lynne Hybels	Advocate for Global Engagement, Willow Creek Community Church	S. Barrington, IL
Jimmy Mellado	President and CEO, Compassion International	Colorado, CO
Paul Osteen, MD	Associate Pastor, Lakewood Church	Houston, TX
Jackie Patillo	President & Executive Director, Gospel Music Association	Nashville, TN
Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero	President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition Pastor, Calvario City Church	Orlando, FL
Michael W. Smith	Singer/Songwriter	Franklin, TN
Richard Stearns	President, World Vision US	Federal Way, WA
Dr. Carolyn Woo	President, Catholic Relief Services	Baltimore, MD