

November 13, 2015

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graham and Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Members Leahy and Lowey:

On behalf of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), I thank you and your Congressional colleagues for passing the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, providing a path forward for FY2016 federal appropriations. As the House and Senate State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittees work to reconcile your positions on funding for FY2016, I urge you to make research and higher education programs a priority. These investments continue to demonstrate a significant return, growing our economy and improving the health and wellbeing of our society. Below, I reiterate APLU's funding requests for FY2016 in the State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations bill and urge that you prioritize these important programs within your increased allocation.

APLU strongly supports the Senate level of funding of \$35 million for "new" higher education partnerships between U.S. and developing nations universities in the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) budget. Further, it would be helpful to clarify the intent of the partnerships as focused on "institutional capacity building." APLU urges you to retain the language in both the House and Senate bills relative to "new partnerships" to ensure USAID is sufficiently investing and expanding these critical programs.

As a former Administrator of USAID during the Reagan Administration, I know how these partnerships are essential to tackling the challenges of food security, human health, economic growth, supporting democracy, strengthening basic and higher education, as well as promoting U.S. national security and economic interests. No country can grow without educated leaders, entrepreneurs, doctors, teachers, nurses, engineers, scientists and other high-skilled drivers of economic growth. Lack of well-educated citizenry is a major impediment to international

development; it undermines U.S. development assistance efforts and makes private sector engagement costly and difficult.

A World Bank study shows the returns on higher education investment are substantial<sup>1</sup>. Contrary to prevailing thought, the poorer the country, the greater the return on investment to higher education. In fact, the poorest world region, Sub-Saharan Africa, shows the highest rates of return from investments in higher education at 21.9 percent, which is nearly double that for primary and secondary education in the region.

One example of a successful partnership funded through USAID is the project with The Ohio State University, Michigan State, Iowa State, Virginia Tech, Florida, Tuskegee, and Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. This is a six-year partnership focused on improving food security and agricultural productivity. The collaboration will result in comprehensive performance improvement of Sokoine's management to produce thousands of well-trained Tanzanians, year after year, whose skills are strongly correlated to private sector needs. These individuals will go on to careers in the private and public sector to create the enabling environment of policy, entrepreneurship and innovation that will produce sustainable food security, and economic growth for Tanzania.

In addition to new partnership opportunities, I also ask you support funding for all the Feed the Future Innovation Labs at \$65 million. APLU is grateful that the House bill supports including all of the Innovation Labs in the appropriations bill rather than just the subset of "collaborative" labs. However, the \$65 million number is preceded by the phrase "up to," which is of significant concern. The "up to" limitation does not direct a specific level of funding and also sets the precedent of a cap in the appropriation. Under this language, we are greatly concerned that USAID could fund the program anywhere between \$0 and \$65 million. We request your support for the House level of \$65 million in the bill for all of the Innovation Labs with the removal of the "up to" language.

As you know, developing nations face enormous challenges, many of which are agricultural and food security related. Our nation's university scientists and researchers through the Innovation Labs are tackling some of the world's most challenging agricultural development problems while sharing scientific knowledge throughout the developing world and increasing productivity and yields, enhancing nutrition, and minimizing negative environmental impact. More than 60 U.S. universities throughout the nation are engaged in the research conducted by the Labs. The global engagement increases the reach of U.S. research institutions, creates linkages that facilitate economic ties with developing countries, and fosters economic growth in developing countries that benefits their economy and ours. All these are forces for national social and economic stability.

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<sup>1</sup> Montenegro, C. E. & Patrinos, H.A. (2013). [Returns to schooling around the world](#). Background paper for the World Development Report 2013.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations. Please consider APLU a resource as you continue your work on the final funding bill for FY2016.

Sincerely,



Peter McPherson  
President  
APLU

cc: Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran  
House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers  
Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Barbara Mikulski  
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs