

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 6, 2022

Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young:

As you work to craft the President’s Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2024, we request that you include sufficient funding for LGBTQI+ programs in line with the President’s *Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Persons Around the World* (hereafter “Memorandum”). Unfortunately, for successive years, funding included in annual budget submissions have fallen short and instead relied on congressional support to increase funding for these critical programs within the State and Foreign Operations accounts.

As the Memorandum states, it is “the policy of the United States to pursue an end to violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, and to lead by the power of our example in the cause of advancing the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons around the world.” The Memorandum recognizes the need to increase our efforts to combat criminalization and discrimination and improve our engagement to promote respect for the human rights of LGBTQI+ persons.

Integral to these efforts is sufficient funding of local LGBTQI+-led civil society organizations around the world. However, budget requests for global LGBTQI+ human rights and development programs at the State Department and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have largely remained flat. Of even greater concern is that budget requests have, at times, requested less funding than that previously enacted by Congress. Insufficient funding risks undercutting the Administration’s stated priorities and the needs of global LGBTQI+ movements facing democratic backsliding, a proliferation of anti-LGBTQI+ laws and policies, and continued stigma and discrimination.

Both the State Department’s Global Equality Fund (GEF) and USAID’s Inclusive Development Hub’s Protection of LGBTQI+ Persons face significant resource constraints amidst overwhelming demands for funding. The GEF can only fund an estimated 15 percent of the requests it receives from embassies around the world. Additionally, U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Jessica Stern has pointed to funding gaps for LGBTQI+-led organizations in Congressional briefings.¹ Similarly, USAID Administrator Samantha Power noted in a July 2021 House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing that USAID’s LGBTQI+ programs were only able to fund roughly 16 percent of the proposals it received from Missions. This sentiment was reflected in the *Interagency Report on the Implementation of the Presidential Memorandum*, which noted that the “LGBTQI+ budget is one of the smallest in the agency. Its size is far less than demand from Missions.”²

¹ House Foreign Affairs Committee. Briefing with Jessica Stern, U.S. Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons. March 16, 2022. <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/2022/3/briefing-with-jessica-stern-u-s-special-envoy-to-advance-the-human-rights-of-lgbtqi-persons>

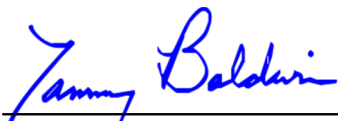
² Interagency Report on the Implementation of the Presidential Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons Around the World (2022). <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Interagency-Report-on-the-Implementation-of-the-Presidential-Memorandum-on-Advancing-the-Human-Rights-of-Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer-and-Intersex-Persons-Around-the-World->

These funding gaps stymie the U.S.'s ability to attain the goals of the Memorandum, despite documentation demonstrating how these funding streams are instrumental in advancing LGBTQI+ rights. For example, the Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC) and Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals of Botswana (LEGABIBO) successfully led two litigation efforts to overturn anti-LGBTQI+ laws and policies, including the ability to legally register as an LGBTQI+ organization and, most recently, to decriminalize same-sex relationships in Botswana. The GEF was able to assist these efforts, providing SALC and LEGABIBO with the support to win these landmark cases.³ Likewise, USAID's programs have funded LGBTQI+ inclusive development efforts, such as the creation of toolkits to enhance security protections for organizations working with key populations - including gay men and other men who have sex with men and transgender people - on HIV programming.⁴ Each of these programs, and the countless others funded through the GEF and USAID's LGBTQI+ programs, enable the United States to live up to the values included within the Memorandum.

It is our sincere hope that the President's Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request will adequately and accurately reflect the Biden Administration's priority to advance LGBTQI+ rights around the world. To this end, we urge you to include \$40 million for the State Department's Global Equality Fund and \$30 million for USAID's Inclusive Development Hub's Protection of LGBTQI+ Persons in the FY24 budget. This level of funding will ensure that we are adequately supporting the U.S.'s efforts to protect and advance LGBTQI+ rights around the world. Additionally, a strong level of funding in the budget will assist our efforts to secure additional resources for these lifesaving programs as a part of the annual appropriations process by emphasizing that global LGBTQI+ programming has the full support of the White House and the agencies themselves.

We stand committed to the global movement for LGBTQI+ equality and hope that the forthcoming FY24 PBR will be in alignment with these values. We thank you for your consideration of our request.

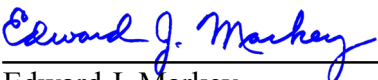
Sincerely,



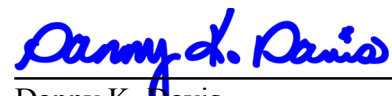
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

[2022.pdf](#), p. 128.

³ Global Equality Fund 2020-2021 Report: Promoting and Protecting the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ People Around the World (2022). P. 15

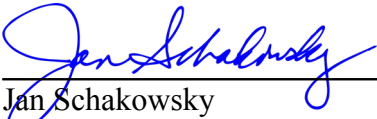
⁴ Five Ways USAID Promotes LGBTQI+ Inclusion Around the World. USAID. August 2021. <https://medium.com/usaaid-2030/5-ways-usaid-promotes-lgbtqi-inclusion-around-the-world-dd665506c7ab>



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



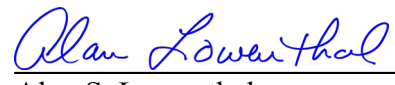
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



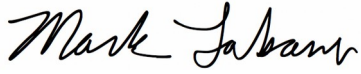
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



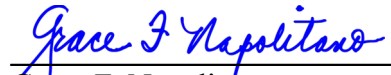
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Alan S. Lowenthal
Member of Congress



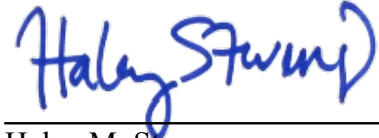
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



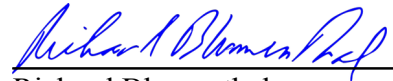
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



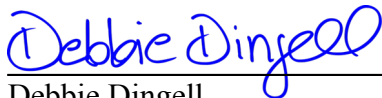
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



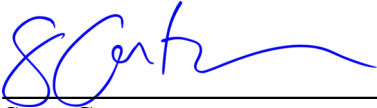
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



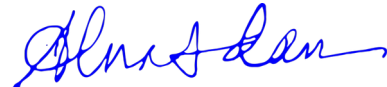
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



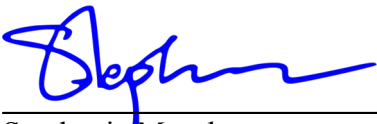
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Susan Wild
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



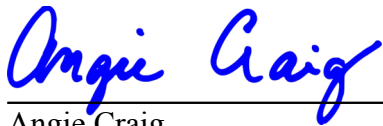
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



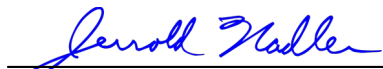
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Angie Craig
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



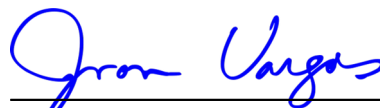
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



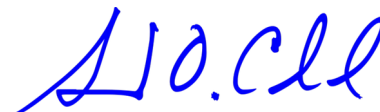
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



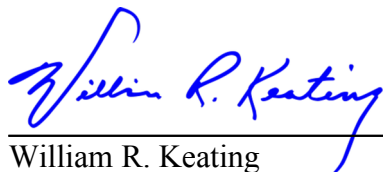
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



William R. Keating
Member of Congress
Chair, Subcommittee on
Europe, Energy, the
Environment, and Cyber



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



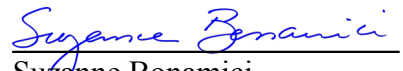
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



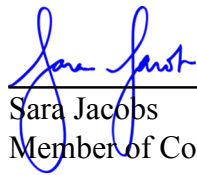
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



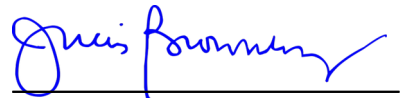
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Marie Newman
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Troy Carter
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



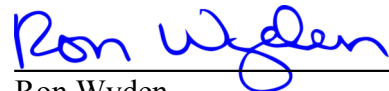
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



Andy Kim
Member of Congress



Ed Case
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



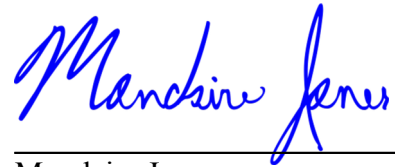
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



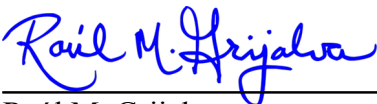
Tina Smith
United States Senator



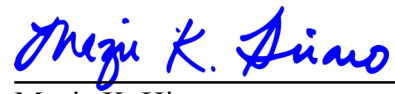
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Gregory W. Meeks
Chair
House Foreign Affairs
Committee



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



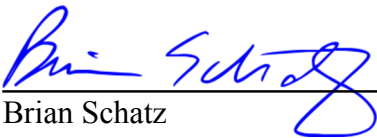
Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



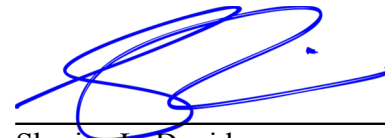
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



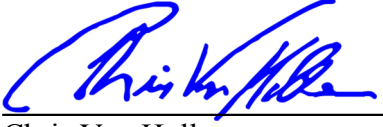
Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress



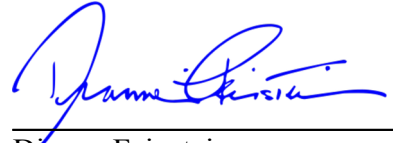
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



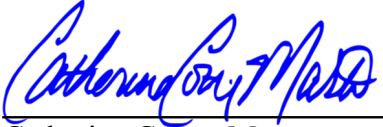
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State

The Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development