Dear Representative / Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing as one of your constituents who belongs to the Global Surgery Student Alliance (GSSA) to seek your support in our requests for increased global health funding in the FY22 US federal global health budget which would improve surgical safety on a global scale. As medical students/dental students and trainees with the vision of “sustainable and accessible surgical, obstetric, and anesthesia care worldwide,” our organization believes that international cooperation, as demonstrated by increased investment, will be critical to achieving these goals.

Specifically, I am asking you to support the inclusion of $100,000,000 for the Neglected Surgical Conditions within the SFOPS FY2022 Appropriations Report Language as follows:

***Neglected Surgical Conditions*** *– The USAID Administrator shall provide no less than* ***$100,000,000*** *to strengthen surgical health capacity to address such health issues as cleft lip and cleft palate, club foot, cataracts, hernias, fistulas, and untreated traumatic injuries in underserved areas in developing countries, including in contexts without water or electricity. Strengthening surgical health systems includes the training of local surgical teams to provide safe, sustainable, and timely surgical care, and assisting ministries of health to develop and implement national surgical, obstetric, trauma, and anesthesia plans.*

Please note the FY21 Report already contains the exact language without the mention of $100 million. By specifying an amount, the US can lead the effort to transform the health systems in the developing world, which has the potential to save 17 million lives a year and avert $12.3 trillion in lost GDP in LMICs over the next 15 years. The investment in surgical systems also [supports pandemic preparedness plans](https://www.globalhealthnow.org/2020-09/prepare-pandemics-invest-surgical-care), as the increased capacity can be repurposed for treatment capacity during pandemics.

In 2015, the US co-sponsored a resolution at the World Health Assembly calling for “Strengthening Emergency and Essential Surgical Care and Anesthesia as a Component of Universal Health Coverage.” Since then the 16 member countries of the Southern African Development Community and the 26 countries of the Pacific Community are moving ahead to strengthen surgical systems and are developing national strategic plans. The 37 countries of the Western Pacific Region of the WHO unanimously adopted a framework for action last year for safe and affordable surgery in the region. The developing world is determined to fill the currently unmet surgical gap of 143 million additional operations by the end of the decade and the US has an opportunity to lead the global surgery movement.

Additionally, the Global Health Council Briefing Book in 2019 further highlights the economic benefits – “the World Bank has identified essential surgical care as one of the most cost-effective health interventions available and a health priority that is within reach for countries around the world. Building surgical capacity benefits an entire health system, empowering the health workforce, stimulating the economy, and contributing to healthier, more productive populations.”

Former U.S. Senator Bill Frist, M.D. hoped to see medical diplomacy used as a “currency for peace” worldwide, showcasing the best of American values, ingenuity, and generosity. Therefore, please help us to build on this valuable FY2022 Report Language by allocating funds to a landmark effort to save and transform the lives of millions of children and adults around the world.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Enter your signature here if possible, otherwise delete]

[Student/Job title]

[School or Association if relevant)

Contact email

**Website**: http://www.globalsurgerystudents.org/usaid