March 24, 2023

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
HT-2, Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Lee:

As you work to assemble the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2024, we urge you to include robust funding for critical international climate finance, conservation, and environment accounts that strengthen U.S. economic and national security interests.

U.S. foreign assistance in the form of both bilateral and multilateral funds for international climate finance serve vital U.S. interests by promoting global stability and security, alleviating global poverty, ensuring significant cost savings by promoting resilience and disaster preparedness, protecting investments in international development, creating economic opportunities for U.S. businesses and workers, and complementing global health efforts. The nations that have contributed least to the crisis are now suffering the most from its escalating impacts. In honoring the U.S. government’s commitment to increase international mitigation and adaptation efforts in FY24, this Congress can help drive ambition among other governments and harness the power of markets to generate further investments.

These programs have produced real, measurable benefits while also leveraging substantial sums in co-financing from other donors. Thanks to USAID, 12 million people globally have been able to use weather and climate data to manage and adapt to climate impacts, allowing them to save lives and better respond to extreme weather events. U.S.-backed programs are also incentivizing developing countries to curb deforestation while addressing rural poverty and improving the way lands are managed and harvested—leveraging U.S. funding dollars with up to 39 times more funding from other donors. Other U.S. programs have mobilized more than $30 for every $1 spent in strengthening and expanding overseas energy programs. Indeed, investment in developing country energy infrastructure is expected to exceed $30 trillion over the next 25 years—a small investment of U.S. funds can help shape that enormous market for decades to come. These programs build resilience to drought, flooding, and other extreme weather events, and steward tropical forests and other carbon-rich and biodiverse landscapes and seascapes. In doing so, they also strengthen American alliances, prevent food and water scarcities, help to avoid conflicts and forced migration, and bolster our own national security.
In many cases, these programs have benefitted from years of bipartisan support under both Republican and Democratic administrations and Congresses. As such, we strongly urge you to include robust funding for bilateral economic assistance for environmental programs in your legislation. Likewise, we also strongly urge you to include robust funding for multilateral assistance to address the crisis.

These programs represent a small fraction of our foreign aid budget, but they provide outsized benefits to the U.S. through smart, secure, and sustainable development. We appreciate your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress

Mike Levin  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress

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André Carson  
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Dwight Evans  
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