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### **Starving the CDC's Epidemic Prevention Program Threatens the Lives of All Americans**

It is not a matter of if, but when. The world has endured pandemics and breakouts of lethal diseases that have risked moving from being a local crisis to a global catastrophe. In the face of this clear and present danger, the US government is not providing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the funds to continue their efforts to strengthen the world's ability to prevent, detect and respond to outbreaks of deadly infectious diseases. This is deeply irresponsible and threatens the lives of all Americans and people around the world.

Four years ago, the Ebola virus tore through three West African nations killing thousands of civilians and devastating their health workforce. This was a wake-up call. The world was put on notice that it was ill prepared to contain these threats. The United States reacted rapidly and led the creation of the Global Health Security Agenda. It is an initiative to strengthen public health networks worldwide to prevent, detect and respond to outbreaks of deadly diseases. With great diplomatic effort from the CDC, State Department and USAID, the US worked with the international community to create a network of 60 nations to be constantly on guard, watchful and ready to respond and contain the spread of future outbreaks that are certain to come. This work however is incomplete and requires further funding and expertise to strengthen and expand this vital effort.

The failure of the US government to provide continued funding for this program is forcing the CDC to close its epidemic prevention programs in 39 out of 49 countries. Many of the countries in which the CDC's programs are closing (DR Congo, Haiti, Rwanda, Pakistan, etc.) are hotspots for future outbreaks.

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health, the world's largest organization of academic institutions involved in addressing global health challenges, strongly requests that Congress appropriate the resources needed to fully fund this life saving program. The failure to do so will cost the US much more in resources (the Ebola outbreak in 2014 cost the US taxpayer \$5.4 Billion) and lives, since lethal infectious diseases know no borders. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in their 2017 Report on Global Health, members from both parties and President Trump have all expressed their support for this effort. We urge Congress to come together in bi-partisan unity to defend the lives of Americans and people around the world and fully fund the CDC and the GHSA.

For comment and further Information, please call Dr. Keith Martin, Executive Director, Consortium of Universities for Global Health, Washington, DC.