PRESS RELEASE

CUGH CALLS ON CONGRESS TO PASS “COVID-19 INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY ACT” TO SAVE LIVES WORLDWIDE

On May 8th, the US Senate introduced the “COVID-19 International Response and Recovery Act” (CIRRA). This comprehensive bill allocates $9 billion (US) to strengthen the international community’s response to COVID-19. This legislation’s reforms include:

- Immediate restoration of US funding to the World Health Organization
- The payment of US dues to international organizations combatting COVID-19
- Involvement in the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, a coalition tasked with the acceleration for a COVID-19 vaccine
- Overall increased humanitarian assistance funding
- Reinstatement of a position within the National Security Council tasked with leading global health security emergencies

CUGH believes such reforms would curb the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths.

By passing this legislation, the US reinforces its commitment to global health security. CIRRA calls on the US to introduce a UN Security Council resolution highlighting the connection between pandemics and its threats to international peace and security worldwide. It would require UN member states to align “their health preparedness frameworks with international best practices and those established by the GHSA [Global Health Security Agenda].” CUGH encourages the US to work with other countries to fill gaps in the GHSA identified through the Joint External Evaluations and increase its membership—currently the GHSA has 67 member countries.

CUGH strongly urges Congress to pass CIRRA and for President Trump to quickly sign the bill into law. CUGH’s Executive Director Dr. Keith Martin stated, “Pandemics know no borders. The failure to take a multinational response to address COVID-19 threatens every nation. CIRRA asserts the US leadership the world needs in combating this global, public health catastrophe.”

For comments please contact Dr. Keith Martin, Executive Director, Consortium of Universities for Global Health, Washington, DC via at executivedirector@cugh.org or 202-974-6363.