

September 30, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairwoman Murray, and Vice Chair Collins:

As conference negotiations begin on the FY25 appropriations bills, we write to offer our strong support for the funding levels and report language for global nutrition and Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) programs included in the House State-Foreign Operations (SFOPS) bill. Specifically, we support the House's inclusion of dedicated funding for RUTF, and report language directing that no less than 50% of the Global Health Program Nutrition sub-account funds be directed to the highest impact malnutrition prevention and treatment interventions. U.S. funding for the procurement and delivery of RUTF and other Specialized Nutritious Foods to prevent and treat severe child malnutrition is one of the most cost-effective and impactful investments we can make with our foreign assistance dollars, and provides an important connection to U.S. farmers and manufacturers. Therefore, we ask that you prioritize maintaining these global nutrition funding and policy directives in the final FY25 SFOPS bill.

Currently, around 45 million children worldwide are afflicted by the deadliest form of malnutrition, known as wasting, and approximately one million will die from it and its complications this year. Despite its severity, there is hope in the form of RUTF, a highly-effective and affordable treatment that can save a child's life in just a few weeks, costing less than \$1 per day and achieving up to 90% cure rates. RUTF is a specially designed high-energy, nutrient-dense food that can be used to treat severe acute malnutrition in children. It consists of simple ingredients: peanuts, sugar, milk powder, oil, soy, and vitamins and minerals. Studies have demonstrated that treatment with RUTF can result in rapid weight gain and improved nutritional status in children, making it an ideal treatment option in resource-limited settings.

Historically, access to RUTF has been limited, with treatment reaching only about one in four children in need. Before 2022, the U.S. Government allocated \$45 million or less annually to

RUTF, with global coverage reaching only 20-25% of wasted children. In 2022, Congress provided the resources for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to make an unprecedented commitment of \$200 million to scale up the procurement of RUTF. That funding was matched by philanthropic and sovereign donors – including from the governments of Canada, Ireland, and The Netherlands – to total \$577 million. Due to this injection of resources, in 2023, global coverage for wasting treatment increased to over 50%, with UNICEF and partners treating 9.3 million children—an increase of 72% from 2021 —marking the highest number of children ever treated for severe wasting since large-scale interventions began.

However, without sustained funding, RUTF treatment will return to previous levels of coverage with only one in four children receiving the life-saving care they need. The U.S. is already one of the world’s largest and most efficient producers of RUTF and the agricultural inputs needed to produce it. U.S.-made RUTF is sourced from farmers across 28 states providing the core ingredients of peanuts, soy protein, dairy, vegetable oil and sugar. In 2023, production of U.S.-made RUTF totaled \$123 million, and American farmers and RUTF manufacturers have the capacity to expand production to meet more of the global need if additional resources are provided.

Ongoing support from Congress is essential to maintaining and building on the tremendous progress made over the last few years in averting child wasting deaths. Without sustained, long-term investment in wasting treatment, coverage rates could drop back to dangerously low levels. We know that you have to make many difficult decisions with limited resources, but the U.S. commitment to global nutrition and scaling up RUTF provides a unique bang for the buck in terms of investing in American innovation, saving lives, and demonstrating U.S. global leadership.

Sincerely,

American Soybean Association  
American Sugar Alliance  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Milk Producers Federation  
U.S. Dairy Export Council  
U.S. Peanut Federation  
American Natural Processors (Dakota Dunes, SD)  
Bunge (Chesterfield, MO)  
Clofine Dairy & Food Products Inc. (Linwood, NJ)  
dsm-firmenich North America (Plainsboro, NJ)  
Edesia Nutrition (North Kingstown, RI)  
Glanbia Nutritionals (Chicago, IL)

Hoogwegt U.S., Inc. (Lake Forest, IL)  
MANA Nutrition (Fitzgerald, GA)  
Phenix Corporation (Elberfeld, IN)  
Phoenix Wood Products (Ashburn, GA)  
Rand Whitney Container, LLC (Worcester, MA)  
Sucro Sourcing (Coral Gables, FL)