Global Health Technologies Coalition Outside Witness Testimony for the Record
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Testimony Submission by Jamie Bay Nishi, Director, Global Health Technologies Coalition

On behalf of the Global Health Technologies Coalition (GHTC), a group of 30 nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, and aligned businesses advancing policies to accelerate the creation of new drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other tools that bring healthy lives within reach for all people, I am providing testimony on fiscal year (FY) 2021 appropriations for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Biological Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA). My testimony reflects the needs expressed by our members working in nearly one hundred countries to develop new and improved technologies for the world's most pressing health issues. We appreciate the Committee's support for global health, particularly continued research and development (R&D) to advance new drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other tools for longstanding and emerging health challenges—like the growing pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). **To accelerate progress towards life-saving tools for a range of health threats, we respectfully request maintaining robust funding for NIH, particularly the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and the Fogarty International Center, providing funding to match CDC's increased responsibilities in global health and global health security—at minimum level funding of $570.8 million for the Center for Global Health (CGH) and $635.8 million for the National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)—and supporting funding for BARDA's critical work in emerging infectious diseases.**

GHTC members strongly believe that sustainable investment in R&D for a broad range of neglected diseases and health conditions is critical to tackling both longstanding and emerging global health challenges that impact people around the world and in the United States.

Coordination is also key: we urge the Committee to request that leaders of Department of Health and Human Services agencies work with counterparts at the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development to develop a cross-government global health R&D strategy to ensure that US investments are efficient, coordinated, and streamlined.

While we have made tremendous gains in global health over the past fifteen years, millions of people around the world are still threatened by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and other neglected diseases and conditions. In 2018, TB killed 1.5 million people, surpassing deaths from HIV/AIDS, while 1.7 million people were newly diagnosed with HIV. Nearly half the global population remains at risk for malaria, and drug-resistant strains are growing. Women and children remain the most vulnerable with around 80% of all global maternal and child deaths occurring in sub-Saharan Africa and 1 out of every 13 children in the region dying before the age of 5, often from vaccine-preventable and other communicable diseases. These figures highlight the tremendous global health challenges that remain and the need for sustained investment in global health R&D to deliver new tools to combat endemic and emerging threats.

New tools and technologies are critical, both to address unmet global health needs and address challenges of drug resistance, outdated and toxic treatments, and difficulty administering current health technologies in poor, remote, and unstable settings. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated once again that we do not readily have all the tools needed to prevent, diagnose, and treat many neglected and emerging infectious diseases—a reality brought into sharp focus during the Zika and West African Ebola epidemics just a few years ago. Yet, the impact of the rVSV-ZEBOV Ebola vaccine on the now-waning epidemic in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) demonstrates the power of having the right tool at the right time to respond to a health emergency. This new vaccine, developed with critical funding from NIH and other USG

partners, is 97.5% effective—a game-changer for this and future outbreaks, evidenced by the recent discharge of the last known Ebola patient in the country. As the US government and global partners mount a rapid research response to COVID-19, the power of a primed and ready R&D ecosystem is even more clearly on display. Today more than ever, the US is at the forefront of global health innovation because of long-term investmet in NIH, CDC, and BARDA.

NIH: The groundbreaking science conducted at the NIH has long upheld US leadership in medical research. Within the NIH, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the Office of AIDS Research, and the Fogarty International Center all play critical roles in developing new health technologies that save lives at home and around the world. Recent activities have led to the creation of new tools to combat neglected diseases, including vaccines for dengue and trachoma, new drugs to treat malaria and TB, and multiple tools for Ebola. Today, NIH is leading US R&D for COVID-19, supporting more than a dozen vaccine, therapeutic, and diagnostic candidates, and, with emergency supplemental funding, rapidly identifying new candidates to support. Thanks to research investments in response to the SARS and MERS outbreaks, NIAID scientists and partners are better prepared to develop diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines against COVID-19. Leadership at NIH has long recognized the vital role the agency plays in global health R&D and has named global health as one of the agency's top-five priorities. It remains critical that support for NIH considers all pressing areas of research—including research in neglected and emerging infectious diseases.

CDC: The CDC also makes significant contributions to global health research, particularly through CGH and NCEZID. CDC's ability to respond to disease outbreaks is essential to protecting the health of citizens both at home and abroad, and the work of its scientists is vital to advancing the development of tools, technologies, and techniques to detect, prevent, and respond to urgent public health threats. Important work at NCEZID includes the

development of one of the first diagnostic kits for COVID-19, innovative technologies to provide a rapid diagnostic test for the Ebola virus, a new vaccine to improve rabies control, and a new diagnostic test for dengue virus. The center also plays a leading role in the National Strategy for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria, to prevent, detect, and control outbreaks of antibiotic-resistant pathogens, such as drug-resistant TB.

Programs at CDC's CGH—including the Divisions of Global HIV and TB, Global Immunization, Parasitic Diseases and Malaria, and Global Health Protection—have also yielded tremendous results in the development and refinement of vaccines, drugs, microbicides, and other tools to combat HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases like leishmaniasis and dengue fever. CGH develops and validates innovative tools for use by US bilateral and multilateral global health programs and leads laboratory efforts to monitor and combat drug and insecticide resistance—functions essential to ensuring that global health programs are responsive, efficient, and tailored for maximum impact. As global disease outbreaks have grown in frequency and intensity, CDC's work in novel technology development and global health security has only become more important. This includes the agency's efforts to quash the most recent Ebola outbreak in DRC through their international leadership on the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). GHTC supports the funding increase to the Division of Global Health Protection (DGHP) within CGH proposed by the Administration for FY21 and urges the Committee to continue annual increases to this and other accounts critical to global health security-related R&D. As shown through COVID-19 and the still-recent epidemics of Ebola and Zika, these functions are being called upon with greater frequency and are critical to protecting the health of Americans and the health of people around the world. CDC monitors 30 to 40 international public health threats each day, has identified disease outbreaks in over 150 countries, responded to over 2,000 public health emergencies, and discovered 12 previously

unknown pathogens. We also urge increased funding for NCEZID, which supports DGHP's response efforts globally with laboratory expertise.

BARDA: BARDA plays an unmatched role in global health R&D by providing an integrated, systematic approach to the development and purchase of critical medical technologies for public health emergencies. By leveraging unique contracting authorities and targeted incentive mechanisms, BARDA partners with diverse stakeholders from industry, academia, and nonprofits to bridge the valley of death between basic research and advanced-stage product development for medical countermeasures—an area where more traditional US government research enterprises do not operate. With these unique assets, BARDA has played a vital role in the development of urgently needed countermeasures for emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) like Ebola and Zika as well as pandemic influenza and antimicrobial resistance. To date, BARDA's work in advancing tools to protect against the threat of EIDs has largely been funded through emergency funding, and today they are being forced to curtail critical work on a range of naturally occurring threats to focus on COVID-19. A dedicated funding line for EIDs would ensure that they are resourced for a wide range of future threats.

In addition to bringing lifesaving tools to those who need them most, investment in global health R&D is also a smart economic investment in the United States **with 89 cents of every US dollar invested in global health R&D going directly to US-based researchers**. **US government investment in global health R&D between 2007 and 2015 generated an estimated 200,000 new jobs and $33 billion in economic growth.** Furthermore, investments in global health R&D today can help achieve significant cost-savings in the future.

Now more than ever, Congress must make smart budget decisions. Global health research, which improves the lives of people around the world while supporting US interests and health security, creating jobs, and spurring economic growth, is a win-win investment.