Global Health Technologies Coalition Public 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 37 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 2022 (FY22) 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). These recommendations reflect the needs expressed by our members working across the globe to develop new and improved technologies for the world's most pressing health issues. We appreciate the Committee's support for global health, particularly for continued research and development (R&D) to advance new drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other tools for long-standing and emerging health challenges, including COVID-19. **To accelerate progress toward lifesaving tools for a range of health threats, we respectfully request increased funding for NIH, including an additional $10 million for the Fogarty International Center (FIC); funding to match CDC's increased responsibilities in global health and global health security—in line with the overall increase for CDC proposed in the President's Discretionary Budget Request, which should be reflected in increases for the Center for Global Health (CGH) and National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)—and the creation of a new, dedicated funding line to support BARDA's critical work in emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), which accelerated to unprecedented levels over the past year and should be sustainably funded beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.**

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 long-standing 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 US 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 15 years, millions of people around the world are still threatened by neglected diseases and conditions. In 2019, tuberculosis (TB) killed 1.4 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 68 percent 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. 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, both to address unmet global health needs and to address challenges of drug resistance, toxic treatments, and health technologies that are difficult to administer in poor, remote, and unstable settings.

The COVID-19 pandemic has again demonstrated that we do not have all the tools needed to prevent, diagnose, and treat many neglected and EIDs—a reality foreshadowed by the recent Zika and Ebola epidemics. The lifesaving effects of the first COVID-19 vaccines demonstrate the power of having the right tools to respond to a health emergency. These new vaccines, developed with critical funding from BARDA, NIH, and other US government partners, are highly effective and built upon past global health research advances. Notably, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is based on technology used in its Ebola vaccine and Zika, respiratory syncytial virus, and HIV/AIDS vaccine candidates, and the Moderna-National

Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) vaccine platform was previously being used to develop vaccines against other respiratory viruses and the chikungunya virus. This demonstrates how strong, sustained investment in R&D allows us to tackle today's health threats and prepare for those of the future. The United States remains at the forefront of global health innovation because of long-term investments in R&D agencies such as NIH, CDC, and BARDA.

NIH: The groundbreaking science conducted at NIH has long underpinned US leadership in biomedical research. Within NIH, NIAID, the Office of AIDS Research, and FIC all play critical roles in developing new health technologies that save lives at home and around the world. FIC, in particular, is a leader in accelerating global scientific progress through international research partnerships, technical assistance, and training. Many FIC-trained scientists have led their countries' responses to COVID-19, Zika, and Ebola, as well as long-standing challenges such as HIV/AIDS. COVID-19 has underscored that science capacity gaps remain between low- and middle-income countries and high-income countries. With additional funding, FIC could leverage its extensive network and training capacity to improve global genomic surveillance and coordination. We urge Congress to request information from FIC on how it might address global scientific capacity gaps in modeling, genomic surveillance, researcher training, and pandemic preparedness and urge appropriators to consider sustainably increasing FIC's relatively modest budget by $10 million dollars in each of the next five fiscal years to enable work in new areas.

Across NIAID, FIC, and other institutes and centers, NIH leadership has long supported 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 extend to all pressing areas of research—including research in neglected and EIDs.

CDC: CDC 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. CDC monitors 30 to 40 international public health threats each day, has identified disease outbreaks in more than 150 countries, responded to more than 2,000 public health emergencies, and discovered 12 previously unknown pathogens—and in complement to these disease monitoring and detection functions, plays a leading role in related R&D. Important work at NCEZID includes the development of diagnostics, including the first diagnostic test for COVID-19 with authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration and Trioplex, a diagnostic that can differentiate Zika, dengue, and chikungunya viruses. NCEZID is a leader in early-stage R&D for vaccines for infectious diseases such as Nipah virus and dengue, Lassa, and Rift Valley fevers. 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.

In complement, CGH is a global leader in immunization, public health capacity-building, and preventing, detecting, and responding to infectious diseases. Programs at CGH—including the Divisions of Global HIV and TB, Global Immunization, Parasitic Diseases and Malaria, and Global Health Protection—have yielded advances in the development of vaccines, drugs, 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 to ensure that global health programs are 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 work to end the recent Ebola outbreaks in Africa through its international

leadership on the Global Health Security Agenda. GHTC supports the funding increase to CDC proposed by the administration for FY22 and urges the Committee to increase funding for CDC's critical global health R&D work at CGH and NCEZID.

BARDA: BARDA plays an unmatched role in global health R&D by using unique contracting authorities and targeted incentive mechanisms to advance the development and purchase of critical medical technologies for public health emergencies. 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 other R&D agencies do not operate. BARDA has been a critical funder of countermeasures for naturally occurring health security threats including EIDs such as COVID-19, Ebola, and Zika, as well as pandemic influenza and antimicrobial resistance. To date, BARDA's work in advancing tools for EIDs has largely been funded through emergency supplemental funding. A dedicated funding line of at least $300 million annually for EID R&D would ensure that BARDA is resourced to respond quickly to future threats, rather than wait on haphazard infusions of supplemental funding during health emergencies.

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.** Investments in global health R&D today can help achieve significant cost-savings in the future—a fact made plain by the economic devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, Congress must make smart investments. Global health R&D, which improves the lives of people around the world while supporting US health security, creating jobs, and spurring economic growth, is a win-win.