

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2011

Dear Colleague:

As Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Members of Congress, we encourage you to co-sign this letter to the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Subcommittee in support of the President's FY12 request of \$439,600,000 for the Peace Corps. This amount is \$6 million less than the President's FY11 request and is essential to ensure that the agency can strengthen all aspects of their operations to meet ever-rising demand around the world, including key areas like the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond.

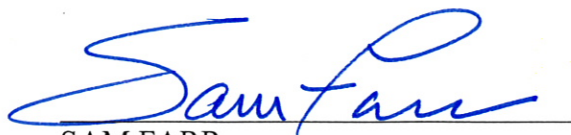
For just 0.8% of our foreign affairs budget, the Peace Corps is one of our most cost-effective agents of diplomacy and development. Since 1961, the Peace Corps has deployed nearly a quarter million Americans to 139 developing countries around the world, including key priority areas for the United States. More than 40 Peace Corps sites help administer the President's Emergency Plan for AIDs Relief (PEPFAR) and nearly 25% of Volunteers serve in a third of all countries considered Muslim. Currently, 8,655 Volunteers from all 50 states are serving in 77 developing countries.

Yet demand for the Peace Corps far exceeds supply. Over 20 countries have requested Peace Corps Volunteers and still other countries have requested an increase in the number of Volunteers. This past year, 13,500 Americans applied for the Peace Corps, but the agency could only afford to place about 4,500. We believe that \$439,600,000 is essential to help meet continually increasing demand for American goodwill.

This March, President Obama honored the Peace Corps' 50th Anniversary with a Presidential Proclamation. In it, he stated that the agency's mission is "more relevant today than ever." We could not agree more. Through war and conflict, Peace Corps Volunteers have shown the world a hopeful side of America that reflects our fundamental ideals of peace and progress. Now more than ever, as the United States confronts harsh scrutiny from the international community, we must support this low-cost, high-return investment in peace.

The **deadline to sign-on is Friday, April 15**. For further information or to add your name to this letter, please contact Caitie Whelan (Caitie.whelan@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Farr's office.

Sincerely



SAM FARR

Member of Congress

Peace Corps Volunteer, Colombia, '64-'66



MIKE HONDA

Member of Congress

Peace Corps Volunteer, El Salvador, '65-'67



JOHN CARAMENDI

Member of Congress

Peace Corps Volunteer, Ethiopia, '66-'68