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## Lions Celebrate LCIF-GAVI Partnership at Capitol Hill Day Reception



Lions Clubs International

Washington, D.C., March 12, 2014 – U.S. Board Members from Lions Clubs International (LCI) met with members of Congress as part of Lions Clubs International Capitol Hill Day. The event was designed to raise awareness of Lions Clubs International and the contributions Lions are making in communities throughout the United States.

“There are 350,000 Lions in the U.S. who are providing valuable community services,” said First International Vice President Joe Preston. “We wanted to showcase the work of our Lions, and remind our representatives just how vital Lions are to their communities and states.”

Visiting board members also invited members of Congress to join them for an evening reception to celebrate the partnership with Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and the GAVI Alliance, a public-private partnership whose mission is to save children’s lives and protect people’s health by increasing access to immunization in the world’s poorest countries.

“I’m proud of what Lions have accomplished in the fight against measles, and we’re looking forward to accomplishing more with the GAVI Alliance. Together, we are saving lives and making the future safer, healthier and brighter for children,” said LCIF Chairperson Wayne Madden.

Lions have committed to raising US\$30 million to improve access to vaccines through the GAVI Alliance. The funds will be matched by the UK government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, bringing the total to US\$60 million. Over 100 million children in the world’s poorest countries will be vaccinated through the partnership. Chairperson



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Madden announced that LCIF will make an initial donation of \$7.5 million to GAVI this year.

“We are grateful to Lions Clubs for partnering with the GAVI Alliance and joining the United States in this global project, working together toward reaching our goal of ending child deaths caused by measles,” said GAVI Alliance Director of U.S. Strategy Natasha Bilimoria.

Lions also play a key social-mobilization role in many impacted communities. Lions work with local leaders, coordinate community-level publicity and serve as volunteers at vaccination centers during immunization campaigns. Local Lions have been active during GAVI-supported measles and measles-rubella immunization campaigns in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and Bangladesh. Lions will be active in measles-rubella campaigns in Tanzania and Burkina Faso later this year.

“Vaccines can’t save lives if children don’t receive them, so Lions work with the community to make sure children are being vaccinated,” said Dr Tebebe Yemane-Berhan, a member of the LCIF Steering Committee from Ethiopia. “We look forward to a future where every child has access to life-saving vaccines.”

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