

Chapel Hill, NC - On July 5, U.S. Rep. David Price will be visiting Kibera, East Africa's largest slum located on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. Price's trip is part of a larger democracy building initiative by the U.S. House of Representatives that will also take him and six other U.S. congressmen to Lebanon and Liberia. In Kibera, Price will visit with Carolina for Kibera (CFK), a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill-based non-profit organization that has been promoting grassroots development in Kibera since 2001 and celebrates its Fifth Anniversary this summer.

In Kibera, an area that has suffered from ethnic and religious violence, nearly 700,000 people live in an area roughly the size of UNC-Chapel Hill's campus. Half of Kibera's residents are under age 15, and there is a severe shortage of adequate healthcare and educational opportunities for residents. CFK, named one of ten "Heroes of Global Health" by Time Magazine in 2005, serves approximately 10,000 Kibera residents each year through four major programs: a youth soccer association, The Tabitha Medical Clinic, The Taka ni Pato (Trash is Cash) youth waste management program and The Binti Pamoja (Daughters United) Reproductive Health Center. CFK's philosophy is grounded in the concept of participatory development, whereby solutions to problems involving poverty are initiated and carried out by those directly affected.

"Carolina for Kibera has a great reputation for turning hopes and dreams into concrete results in some of the toughest living circumstances in the world," Price said. "Non-profits like CFK play an instrumental role in the development of democracy because they foster empowerment and initiative among a population that has long been disenfranchised by the political process."

During Price's trip to Kibera, he will be touring CFK's projects and meeting with UNC students who have spent their summer working with CFK. His trip is in conjunction with the newly established U.S. House of Representatives Democracy Assistance Commission, of which Price is the ranking Democratic member. The Commission has helped eight developing countries, including Kenya, to strengthen democratic institutions by making their parliaments more independent and effective. While in the country, Price and other delegation members will be meeting with Kenyan leaders to share their knowledge and experience in the legislative process, in hopes that the international exchange will help strengthen Kenya's developing democratic institutions.

###

