

May 6, 2021

Honorable Joseph. R. Biden
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Honorable Anthony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Harry S. Truman Building
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: HIV/AIDS - Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 40th Anniversary Day

Dear Mr. President, Secretary Blinken and Secretary Becerra:

June 5th this year will be the 40th anniversary of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report where the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention first reported the cases of a rare lung infection, *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia, that later became linked to HIV/AIDS. This historic anniversary could be the powerful backdrop for the Biden/Harris administration to announce their commitment to end the HIV epidemic in America and abroad. A Rose Garden, Roosevelt Room or Oval Office event could be the historic marker in the beginning of the end of HIV.

Today, there remain important vacancies in roles critical to this Administration's fight against HIV/AIDS at home and abroad. Specifically, the offices of Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy, the Global AIDS Coordinator and the chairs of the President's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS all remain unfilled. This event would be an ideal time to announce appointments or nominees to these offices and reinforce this Administration's commitment. Some suggested options for how an event might be organized are attached to this letter.

While we of course understand that an event may need to be virtual, our request would be for a socially distanced and limited in-person event. We ask that the majority of guests be people living with HIV. The HIV/AIDS movement is led and serves people who are marginalized because of the color of their skin, HIV status, gender, gender identity, where they live or who they love. Bringing our community to the White House validates our lives and visually documents the Administration's promise to lift up everyone.

We thank you for your leadership and look forward to your continued commitment to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Should questions arise, if you need additional information, or if you or your staff would like to meet with signatories of this letter to discuss these issues, please contact Paul Kawata at pkawata@nmac.org (202.277.2777) or Kevin Fisher at kfisher@avac.org (347-409-4357).

Sincerely

AIDS United
The AIDS Institute
AVAC
CHANGE (Center for Health and Gender Equity)
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Friends of the Global Fight Against AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria
HealthGap
John Snow Inc.
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Minority AIDS Council



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FRIENDS
OF THE GLOBAL FIGHT

AGAINST AIDS,
TUBERCULOSIS
AND MALARIA

Suggested Approaches for a White House Event on June 4

The President would announce his commitment to ending the HIV epidemic. Joining him on stage could be Dr. Fauci, Secretary Becerra, Secretary Blinken, Acting Global AIDS Coordinator Achrekar, Assistant Secretary for Health Levine, and CDC Director Walensky. These federal leaders could speak on what they will do to end HIV. All speakers will be asked to wear Red Ribbons.

Additional participants to round out the event could include:

Congressional Leaders

House Speaker Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Schumer, and the chairs of the racial, ethnic, LGBTQ and HIV caucuses will join the President. They will discuss their commitment to work with the President to ensure his budget is passed. All speakers will be asked to wear Red Ribbons.

People Living with HIV

4 or 5 People Living with HIV who represent the geographic and demographic diversity will stand with the President. They will share stories about what it means to live to see the end of the HIV epidemic and thank the President for his commitment. All speakers will wear Red Ribbons.

HIV Care Providers Reassigned to Fight COVID

4 or 5 HIV care provider who were reassigned to fight COVID will join the President. They could make the link that the HIV infrastructure has been used for the COVID clinic trials and PEPFAR will work to get vaccines to the world. All speakers will wear Red Ribbons.

Additionally the event could end with a small portion of the AIDS Memorial Quilt being opened on the front lawn of the White House with the large Red Ribbon in the background. The President and the Vice President and other VIPs will read the names of people who died from HIV while the quilts are being opened.