

GAPP 2016 Letter to President-elect Trump

January __, 2016

President-elect Donald J. Trump
Presidential Transition Headquarters
1800 F Street NW
Washington DC 20270-0117

Dear President-elect Trump:

The undersigned members of the Global AIDS Policy Partnership (GAPP) respectfully submit the following recommendations for global HIV/AIDS priorities for your new Administration. The GAPP is a coalition of more than 70 advocacy and implementing organizations committed to expanding and improving global HIV/AIDS programming. We also offer strong support for the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP) and their recommendations for sustaining the domestic HIV/AIDS response in the United States.

Your Administration has a window of opportunity to be truly ambitious in achieving control of the AIDS epidemic. Thinking big now could mean that ending AIDS as a public health threat becomes one of the extraordinary legacies of your leadership.

The U.S. investment in the global HIV/AIDS response through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) has a long history of bi-partisan support. These programs have flourished because both Republicans and Democrats worked together to save millions of men, women and children in countries hardest hit by this devastating disease.

The impact of U.S. leadership and investment in the global HIV/AIDS response is reflected in the progress made in the prevention of new HIV infections, reduction of AIDS-related deaths, and treatment scale-up for people living with HIV. The number of people accessing HIV life-saving antiretroviral treatment has more than doubled in the past five years to 18.2 million as of June 2016. Since 2000, the rate of new HIV infections has declined 34%; among children they have declined 70%. At the end of 2016, PEPFAR supported a total of 11.4 million adults and children on treatment and the Global Fund supported 9.2 million people. Since 2003, PEPFAR has also prevented nearly 2 million babies from being born with HIV. A strategic focus on those key populations most affected and at risk for HIV infection through partnerships with governments and communities is responsible for these results.

However, the job of HIV treatment scale-up is only half done. Despite global efforts, 18.5 million people living with HIV still require immediate treatment, and in 2015, there were 2.1 million new HIV infections worldwide.

We respectfully submit the following for your consideration:

Political Leadership

I. Make the global HIV/AIDS response a White House priority

HIV continues to spread globally and requires a commitment to bold action to control the epidemic once and for all. Failure to fast-track investments and efforts today will result in a dramatic spike in new HIV

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infections – an estimated 100 million by 2030 up from 37 million in 2016 – and the AIDS response will no longer be able to keep pace with the epidemic..

Making the global AIDS response a White House priority will also empower you to negotiate greater investments from other donor countries and the most affected developing countries, amplifying and protecting the historic US investment in the response.

II. Maintain strong global HIV/AIDS Ambassadorial leadership

It is essential that the U.S. Global HIV/AIDS Ambassador position be held by an experienced leader who understands the complex dynamics of global HIV/AIDS programming and the importance of maintaining the efficiency and effectiveness of programs that support millions of people with lifesaving HIV treatment and prevention services every day.

Given the critical importance of continuous careful stewardship of the PEPFAR program, we respectfully urge to you to not accept Ambassador Birx's resignation until such time as your Administration has finalized your decision about future PEPFAR leadership.

III. Continue Strategic and Synergistic Financial Investments

Gaps in prevention and treatment scale-up remain significant and unless additional resources are applied to help close these gaps, there is a real risk the epidemic will rebound with force and grow quickly to a scale that is ultimately uncontainable at any cost. Continued investment in the Global Fund also has leveraged resources and has resulted in essential synergies.

Therefore, we ask the Trump Administration to commit to: (1) proposing \$6 billion annually to PEPFAR bilateral funding in the Presidential Budget by 2020; and (2) maximizing the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund by at a minimum honoring the U.S. commitment made during the 2016 Global Fund replenishment conference

Without an increase in U.S. financial support, and even more committed leadership, we risk stalling the arc of remarkable progress—and facing a catastrophic level of human suffering that is preventable. At this juncture in the fight against AIDS, the U.S. should accelerate its historic, bipartisan commitment.

IV. Maintain Commitments on HIV/AIDS Innovation and Access

Our progress in combating the HIV epidemic has been made possible by research and development. The National Institutes of Health and the United States Agency for International Development has made major contributions that have led to improved therapeutic and prevention tools, and these efforts must continue as must vital research to develop a cure and a vaccine for HIV.

Conclusion

Your Administration has the opportunity to save the lives of millions of men, women and children, if you act with urgency against an epidemic that has already claimed 35 million lives worldwide. We ask that the Trump Administration seize this chance to finish what the United States so nobly started and bring an end, once and for all, to a terrible pandemic we have the tools to control.