



## THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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**ON THIS WORLD AIDS DAY 2007  
THE AIDS INSTITUTE DEMANDS GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE WORLD  
TO DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP BY KEEPING THE PROMISE TO STOP AIDS  
HIGHER HIV/AIDS INCIDENCE NUMBERS IN THE UNITED STATES PROVIDE  
WAKE UP CALL FOR INCREASED DOMESTIC EFFORTS**

***US Government Must Keep the Promise and Stop AIDS At Home and Abroad***

As the world marks World AIDS Day on December 1<sup>st</sup>, The AIDS Institute demands governments around the world to demonstrate leadership in ending the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Domestically, The AIDS Institute calls on the U.S. government to heed the theme of this year's day of remembrance, *Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise*. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is about to announce new increased HIV/AIDS incidence numbers for the United States, we urge the U.S. government and all Americans to rededicate their efforts to Stop AIDS here in our own country," said Dr. Gene Copello, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute.

In just the past 25 years, over 550,000 people in the U.S. have died of AIDS, and another 1.2 million have become infected and are living with the disease. "While it has been estimated there have been 40,000 new infections annually in the U.S., we understand the CDC will soon announce that this number has been significantly higher," said Copello. "Our Nation and its people have become complacent, but we have a real emergency and we must do much, much more to prevent HIV in this country," he continued.

"As a start, we must have a comprehensive, outcomes oriented, evidence-based national AIDS effort that focuses on prevention," suggested Copello. "Such a strategy must be bold and call for an end to AIDS. It must also address those communities often ignored but most affected by HIV/AIDS: African-Americans, Latinos, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, gay men of all colors, and injection drug users."

"We need prevention policies and programs that speak to these communities and to an end to failed policies, such as abstinence-only until marriage programs and bans on needle exchange programs," said Carl Schmid, Director of Federal Affairs for The AIDS Institute. "The CDC, state health departments and community based organizations also need increased funding," added Schmid. "It is a disgrace that adjusted for inflation, CDC's HIV prevention budget has fallen by 19.3% from FY02-07. This Congress still has an opportunity to increase HIV prevention funding for next year and we call upon them to do so at once," continued Schmid. The FY08 Labor HHS Appropriation bill currently pending in the Congress includes a less than 1% increase, solely directed to HIV testing.

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On this World AIDS Day, The AIDS Institute also calls upon the U.S. to continue to *Keep the Promise* by providing quality and affordable healthcare, including antiretroviral therapy, to all people with HIV/AIDS who need it, and continue to invest in biomedical and behavioral research.

Equally important, the United States must continue its commitments to eradicate HIV/AIDS abroad. Copello said: “We know HIV doesn’t stop at country boundaries. In a highly mobile world, none of our communities will be safe from HIV until all nations are free from the pandemic. All nations around the world, including the United States, must address its domestic situation, but also participate in the worldwide promise to stop AIDS.”

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recently revised the global estimate of HIV prevalence downward from 40 million to 33.2 million. This revised estimate is due mainly to improved methods of determining the scope of the disease. Of the total difference in the 2006 and 2007 estimates, 70% are due to changes in the estimates in Angola, India, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe.

James Sykes, Global Program Coordinator for The AIDS Institute said: “Although, the revised global estimate is about 16% less than previously thought, The AIDS Institute is still mindful of the fact that every day, over 6,800 people become infected with HIV and over 5,700 die from AIDS worldwide. This is mostly because of inadequate access to HIV prevention and treatment services. That is still over 2.4 million new infections and over 2 million deaths worldwide a year.”

The United States Leadership Against Global HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act, better known as the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), has provided treatment to over 1.1 million people since its inception in 2003. The AIDS Institute, on this World AIDS Day, calls on Congress to fully fund PEPFAR and keep the promise to stop AIDS.

We call on the leaders of the United States and around the world to remain committed to the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. **STOP AIDS: Keep the Promise!**

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*For more information and to become involved in AIDS advocacy work, please contact  
The AIDS Institute at: (202) 835-8373, or by email at: [Info@theaidsinstitute.org](mailto:Info@theaidsinstitute.org) or [www.TheAIDSInstitute.org](http://www.TheAIDSInstitute.org)*

*The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit and nonpartisan agency that promotes action for social change  
through public policy research, advocacy and education.*