

Public Comment  
Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS  
March 17, 2006  
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Distinguished Council Members:

My name is Dr. Gene Copello and I serve as Executive Director of The AIDS Institute, a national public policy research, advocacy, and education organization. Thank you for this opportunity to provide public comment. I have four recommendations to make.

1. The PACHA International Committee should continue to consider the issue of tariff elimination on medications and medical products provided to the developing world. We have been encouraged by the recent actions of the office of the United States Trade Representative and of Ambassador Portman in particular. Tariffs remain a structural barrier to the provision of high quality AIDS care in the developing world.
2. The AIDS Institute has long been concerned about the predicted shortage of trained HIV medical providers in some regions of the United States. More recently, we have become part of a coalition of organizations reviewing this issue at the global level as well. My hope is that the PACHA International and Care and Treatment Committees will review this domestic and global problem and work with the healthcare and advocacy communities to develop options for meeting the increased need for trained HIV medical providers.
3. Yesterday, Mr. Thomas Liberti of the Florida Department of Health explained the damaging impact that reduced HIV prevention funding can have even in a jurisdiction that appears to be gaining some control over the epidemic. The PACHA Prevention Committee should consider how it can develop recommendations to appropriately increase HIV prevention funding as well as continue its discussion about new models to combat the domestic epidemic in light of PACHA's goal for an HIV-free generation.
4. The AIDS Institute was appreciative of the President's remarks in the 2006 State of the Union regarding elimination of the waiting lists associated with the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP); and the subsequent FY 2007 budget recommendations made by the Administration. However, the community need number for ADAP is approximately \$196 million new dollars in FY 2007. We are ready to work closely with the PACHA Care and Treatment Committee, the Administration, and Congress to provide appropriate funding for ADAP to ensure that waiting lists for medications in the United States are a thing of the past.