



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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THE AIDS INSTITUTE RECOGNIZES PASSAGE OF PEPFAR REAUTHORIZATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, DC – In 2003, when the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was first implemented, fewer than 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were taking lifesaving anti-retroviral therapy (ART). Today, thanks to PEPFAR nearly 1.5 million people are now receiving treatment. The original goals of treating 2 million people with HIV/AIDS, preventing 7 million new HIV infections, and providing care and treatment for 10 million people – including orphans and vulnerable children -- are on track to be achieved. This remarkable achievement and success serves as the basis for the widespread bipartisan support that PEPFAR has received in both houses of Congress. The AIDS Institute is encouraged by the fact that PEPFAR reauthorization legislation, known as the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008, is seeking to boost the funding level from \$15 billion to \$50 billion as well as provide mechanisms to ensure the long-term sustainability of the program. Several amendments to the House version of the Bill, which passed the House yesterday (April 2) will strengthen the program. These include addition of safe drinking water efforts to the list of programs with direct linkages to other PEPFAR funded programs; expands the plan for strengthening health systems of host countries by allowing for African postsecondary educational institutions to collaborate with US postsecondary educational institutions and specifically historically black U.S. colleges and universities; and including Malawi, Swaziland, and Lesotho in the list of countries served by PEPFAR.

The AIDS Institute commends the majority and minority leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and committee staff for their earnest pursuit of passage of the bill by the full House. Likewise, the Institute recognizes the efforts of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and of the President and the Department of State in working toward completion of PEPFAR reauthorization.

Attention will now turn to the Senate where a similar PEPFAR reauthorization bill awaits action by the full Senate. The AIDS Institute will continue to advocate with Senate offices and, later, with the joint Senate-House conference committee, for further improvements and enhancements to PEPFAR as it is extended for the next five years.

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For more information and to become involved in AIDS advocacy work, please contact
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The AIDS Institute is a nonprofit agency that promotes action for social change
through public policy research, advocacy and education.