



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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THE AIDS INSTITUTE COMMENDS REPRESENTATIVE LEE FOR INTRODUCING BILL TO LIFT HIV TRAVEL AND IMMIGRATION BANS

Washington, DC – The AIDS Institute applauds Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) for introducing a bill that would undo the archaic and unjust travel and immigration bans on HIV positive individuals entering the United States. The AIDS Institute strongly supports “The HIV Nondiscrimination in Travel and Immigration Act of 2007” and urges its passage.

“During the past twenty years that this policy of discrimination has been in place, we have learned a great deal about HIV transmission and prevention. The current ban is based on ignorance and fear, and it is time that policy corresponds with current science”, commented Dr. Gene Copello, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute.

Jamila Taylor, Global Policy Coordinator for The AIDS Institute, added, “The United States’ dismissive history against HIV positive individuals seeking travel into this country must not be ignored. The policy imposed on our immigration and travel system to ban these individuals is absolutely reprehensible. Rep. Lee has yet again set the stage for progressive leadership in the fight against HIV and AIDS with the introduction of this bill.”

On December 1, 2006, World AIDS Day, President Bush directed his Administration to initiate a rulemaking that would propose a categorical waiver for HIV positive individuals to enter the U.S. on short-term visas. “While The AIDS Institute was pleased the President recognized the need for what he described as ‘Ending Discrimination Against People Living With HIV/AIDS’, when and if it is promulgated it would only address short term visits and the underlying discriminatory law would still stay on the books,” noted Carl Schmid, Director of Federal Affairs at The AIDS Institute. “The only real solution is to repeal the current law.”

“As the United States continues to advocate for increased HIV/AIDS awareness worldwide, our policies at home are undermining our credibility as a global leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS,” added Copello. “Because of this policy, the US has not been able to host an International AIDS Conference in 18 years, and will not be able to in the future. We must join other industrialized nations in lifting the travel and immigration ban for HIV positive individuals.”

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