



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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THE AIDS INSTITUTE URGES PRESIDENT-ELECT TRUMP TO MAINTAIN U.S. COMMITMENT TO ENDING HIV/AIDS

Warns Against Destabilizing Health Care in World AIDS Day Letter

Washington, D.C. - As the world pauses to mark World AIDS Day on December 1st, The AIDS Institute sent a [letter](#) to President-elect Donald J. Trump urging him and his Administration to maintain U.S. leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS, both domestically and globally.

In the letter, The AIDS Institute described the progress that has been made in reducing new infections and increasing the number of people receiving care and treatment. It stated, "We now know how to prevent and treat HIV. As President, you and your Administration will have the responsibility of determining how well we as a nation address this continued health threat. The lives of millions of people are at stake, along with their families, friends, and communities."

The AIDS Institute noted the progress achieved over the last three decades has come about in a bipartisan fashion, but there is still much to be done. In the U.S., there are 50,000 new infections each year and 1.2 million people living with HIV, who should all receive care and antiretroviral treatment. Individuals who test positive for HIV and are linked to care and treatment are able to live relatively healthy lives. Since treatment suppresses the virus, it actually helps prevent the transmission of HIV as well. "With continued progress, if we take steps to adequately prevent HIV and provide treatment to those living with HIV, scientists believe we can actually end HIV and AIDS."

"Because HIV/AIDS is an infectious disease and public health issue, the federal government has played a significant role in leading our nation's response to the epidemic." The AIDS Institute highlighted the important work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which provides

health care, life-saving medications, and other essential health services to 533,000 low-income people living with HIV. Other government programs such as AIDS research at the NIH, the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) at HUD, and several others are critical to the nation's response to HIV/AIDS. The AIDS Institute urged President-elect Trump in his budget proposals to adequately fund these programs "to ensure they sufficiently address the needs of people living with HIV and those who are at risk of HIV."

Finally, The AIDS Institute expressed its concern with the President-elect's desire to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and cut Medicaid. Medicaid is currently the largest source of insurance coverage for people with HIV, covering more than 40 percent of people with HIV who are in care. The ACA, which provides states the ability to expand their Medicaid programs, has greatly benefited low-income people living with HIV, many of whom did not qualify in the past.

"With passage of the ACA, the role of private insurance has increased as insurers are now prohibited from excluding people with HIV from their plans, which they historically did. . . . The ACA also provides other critical patient protections, coverage of preventive services, such as HIV testing without cost-sharing, and access to key essential health benefits."

The AIDS Institute cautioned the incoming Administration against undermining healthcare for millions of Americans as they consider changes to the ACA. "While improvements can be made, such as limiting patient cost-sharing for prescription medications, the HIV community cannot afford to go backwards by eliminating or destabilizing the healthcare the ACA provides."

"We as a nation are on a course that can greatly reduce the number of new infections and get us closer to ending HIV and AIDS," The AIDS Institute concluded. "With a continued commitment, necessary resources, and effective policies, we can achieve our goals to reduce or eliminate new infections, increase access to care and treatment, and reduce health disparities."

The AIDS Institute's letter to the President-elect is available [here](#).

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

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