

The Honorable Joseph Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

March 16, 2021

Dear President Biden:

We, the undersigned civil society organizations, are calling on your administration to prioritize achievement of the global goal of securing a defeat of HIV by 2030 as a public health threat by: 1) urgently nominating a qualified U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and U.S. Special Representative for Global Health Diplomacy; 2) ensuring that the program he/she/they lead, PEPFAR (the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief), remains housed within the U.S. State Department in order to safeguard the integrity of PEPFAR's programming, oversight role, and diplomatic efforts; and 3) ensuring PEPFAR continues to operate with urgency, does not compromise its vision and mission, and at minimum maintains its current guidelines for meaningful engagement of independent civil society at all levels of the program, as codified in the annual [PEPFAR Global COP/ROP Global Guidance](#).

The U.S. alone cannot end HIV as a public health threat, but U.S. leadership has a powerful impact. In the face of two colliding pandemics strong leadership from the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator is greatly needed. Governments around the world including the U.S. have committed to achieving the "95-95-95" HIV service delivery targets by 2030 and PEPFAR is central to providing continuous HIV prevention, testing, and treatment. The COVID-19 epidemic has already resulted in grave disruptions to HIV service delivery and threats to the human rights of communities that are highly marginalized and vulnerable. PEPFAR has a critical role to play in mitigating these adverse effects; preventing further setbacks to treatment, prevention, and health systems; and in strengthening diplomatic engagement with national governments around vital health policy matters. PEPFAR's success requires scale up of evidence-based and human rights driven programs, and an appointment of the next PEPFAR leader is necessary to deliver that acceleration.

This critical moment requires forthright leadership in the global HIV and COVID-19 responses that will help define the global HIV response over the next five years. That leadership must continue to reside in the U.S. State Department to enable PEPFAR to maintain its oversight functions and project the diplomatic weight that the global response to HIV requires. The next PEPFAR Ambassador must understand the continued urgency of the challenges facing achievement of the global HIV targets, have a clear vision to drive continued evidence-based program implementation to ensure services are scaled and delivered with dignity and respect for human rights, and commit to safeguarding -- and expanding -- the integral role of independent civil society advocacy in holding PEPFAR accountable at all levels of the program.

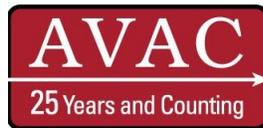
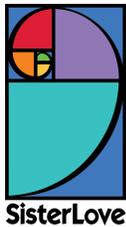
Without a qualified leader in this role, we run the risk of diminishing the impact we will have on achieving our shared global goals, and on shaping PEPFAR's strategic direction. That leadership is needed urgently.

We look forward to your immediate response.

Signed,

SisterLove Inc
Treatment Action Group
Coalition Plus
AVAC
amfAR
CHANGE
MPACT
GNP+

Health GAP
Uganda Key Populations Consortium (UKPC)
Kenya Key Populations Consortium
Friends of the Global Fight
Infectious Disease Society of America
HIV Medicine Association



CC:

The Honorable Antony John Blinken, United States Secretary of State
Linda Etim, Senior Director for Development, Global Health, and Humanitarian Response, National Security Council and
Catherine M. Russell, Director of the White House Presidential Personnel Office