

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2101

November 30, 2011

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Clinton and Sebelius:

We write to you in anticipation of World AIDS Day, which marks a critical point in the history of the fight against HIV/AIDS, and to applaud the goal of an AIDS-free generation. Since the HIV/AIDS epidemic began thirty years ago, it has become one of our greatest public health challenges, but one that the United States has met head-on with significant investments in research, treatment, prevention, and care activities. This important day provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made against HIV/AIDS over the past three decades, and how we can make even greater strides against HIV/AIDS in the years to come, both at home and overseas.

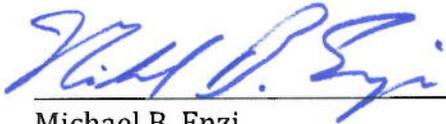
There have been a number of remarkable advances in the science related to HIV/AIDS in the past few decades. Most recently, we, like many others, were inspired by the exciting findings of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded study (HPTN 052) that early treatment of HIV-positive individuals with antiretroviral therapy can prevent sexual transmission of HIV among serodiscordant couples. While the concept of treatment as prevention is not new, the overwhelmingly positive results from this study lend even greater weight to the innovative focus on treatment of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the critical importance of the treatment focus of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program.

PEPFAR is a testament to the commitment and compassion of the United States to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS worldwide. The requirement that more than half of bilateral PEPFAR funds be spent on life-saving medical care for people with HIV/AIDS is a crucial component to the program's success. PEPFAR funds have supported life-saving treatment for more than 3.2 million men, women, and children around the globe and supported critical prevention efforts, including the prevention of mother-to-child transmission. Through PEPFAR, we continue to make tremendous progress in the global fight against HIV/AIDS.

While we are taking positives steps in the fight against HIV/AIDS abroad, we must also continue momentum in the fight against HIV/AIDS at home. As you know, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program provides crucial treatment, prevention, and care services to patients living with HIV/AIDS. There are, however, thousands of eligible patients still on waiting lists for life-saving antiretroviral treatment through the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). Again, we express our concerns with these waiting lists and remain committed to working with you to find a solution to this problem.

We applaud the strong statement made by Secretary Clinton in announcing the Administration's goal of an AIDS-free generation at a recent speech at NIH and commend the Administration's commitment to HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention. As such, we look forward to updated PEPFAR treatment goals and additional information on how the Administration plans to fulfill its commitment to an AIDS-free generation. We also look forward to working with you to find a solution to eliminate the ADAP waiting lists here in the United States. We appreciate your attention to this important issue, and we stand firm in our dedication to improving the domestic and international response to HIV/AIDS on behalf of the millions of patients living with this disease.

Sincerely,



Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator



Tom Coburn, M.D.
United States Senator



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator