



Congressman Donald Payne

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Payne Touts U.S. Role in Global Fight against HIV/AIDS on World AIDS Day
Calls for Commitment to an HIV-Free Generation in Our Lifetime

Washington, D.C. - *World AIDS Day is celebrated on December 1st every year around the globe to raise awareness, commemorate lives lost, and to celebrate victories in the fight against AIDS. On this World AIDS Day, the UNAIDS High Level Commission on HIV Prevention released a Declaration calling on world leaders to accelerate the decline in new HIV infections and to spur on a prevention revolution. This important declaration comes at a time when we recognize recent advances in the fight against HIV/AIDS that have given the world hope in conquering the disease.*

Congressman Donald M. Payne, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, released the following statement:

“On this World AIDS Day, Americans can be proud that the United States’ leadership in the global fight against HIV/AIDS has yielded remarkable results. Through our commitment to PEPFAR and the Global Fund, the U.S. has helped reduce the number of new HIV infections and deaths around the globe by nearly 20%. PEPFAR has directly supported antiretroviral therapy (A.R.T.) for 2.5 million individuals -- just over half of individuals on treatment in low and middle-income countries -- and has provided care for over 7 million adults and 3.6 million infants and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS. We are changing the course of the AIDS epidemic and have reached part one of the Millennium Development Goal for HIV. We have helped 56 countries across the globe to stabilize or significantly reduce the rate of new HIV infections. In 33 countries, HIV incidence has fallen by more than 25% between 2001 and 2009. Of these countries 22 are in sub-Saharan Africa. The biggest epidemics in sub-Saharan Africa—Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—have either stabilized or are showing signs of decline.

“Hope for even more success is on the horizon with news of recent scientific breakthroughs, due to research studies supported by the U.S. Through one study, we’ve discovered that a microbicide gel could soon produce a new reality for women across the globe by making it possible for them to better control of their ability to prevent HIV. Also, a new study on the use of HIV treatment medication by healthy persons has shown that pre-exposure prophylaxis, coupled with other intervention measures, can cut the HIV transmission rate by up to 73%.

“Even in the midst of these great advances and accomplishments in the battle against HIV/AIDS, today we must remember our friends, family and loved ones, some 30 million people globally, who have lost the battle against AIDS. And we must commit to helping the estimated 10 million people who are

currently awaiting treatment or those whose suffering is compounded by punitive laws, human rights abuses and stigma. We must acknowledge that our progress is fragile. UNAIDS has rightly reported that the fight against HIV/AIDS is negatively impacted by a number of factors, including poverty, gender inequity, inequity in country health and the education systems, discrimination against marginalized people, and unequal country resource pathways. The U.S. Global Health Initiative aims to address the epidemic by tackling many of these challenges head on, but more can be done to ensure continued success.

“In 2009, UNAIDS called for the virtual elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV by 2015. In the 10 most severely affected countries, this is a realistic aim and can be achieved through significantly increased action to implement proven strategies to eliminate HIV transmission to young people. Today, I call on Congress, the Administration, and the American people to join with the global community and HIV endemic countries and commit to the necessary strategies and resources to produce an HIV-free generation in our lifetime. ”

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