9 New Members Named to President's HIV Council—and They're Meeting Right Now

PACHA had been empty over a year, after everyone quit or was fired by Trump.

March 14, 2019 By Trent Straube

PACHA lives! Nine new members have been named to the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA), bringing the total to 11 if you count the two cochairs. This in itself is big news considering that PACHA had been in effect nonexistent for most of Trump's presidency. What's more, they are holding their first meetings this week, which you can watch on Facebook below.

Soon after Trump became president, six members resigned from PACHA in protest of his attacks on health care and because he "simply does not care." Then in December 2017, Trump fired the remaining 16 members.

Nothing more happened until nearly a year later. In December 2018, Alex Azar, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), named two cochairs of PACHA: Carl Schmid, the deputy executive director of The AIDS Institute, and John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH, the secretary of health for Washington state.

Now comes an announcement from HHS not only that nine new members have been named but also that PACHA is meeting Thursday and Friday, March 14 and 15, in Washington, DC. Of note, they will discuss Trump's recently proposed plan to end HIV in the United States by 2030.

The public is invited to attend or watch via webcast. Videos are also being posted on social media.

"PACHA will play a critical role in our collective response to this public health issue, particularly in the wake of the recently proposed 'Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America,'" said Admiral Brett P. Giroir, MD, the HHS assistant secretary for health, in the press release.

AIDS United, a national organization that fights the epidemic through grant-making and policy, released a statement saying that the appointment of new members shows the Trump administration "is moving on its commitment to its Ending the Epidemic Plan. Having an active body is a welcome change, as the council has laid vacant and inactive for more than a year.

“That being said,” AIDS United continued, “there are an additional 14 spots still available before the council reaches its full membership of 25 authorized in its charter. It is our understanding that there will be additional members added in the near future. We hope that these additions will reflect meaningful involvement of people living with HIV and reflect a broader and more diverse representation of the epidemic itself, including, gay and bisexual men of color, transgender women, women of color, and people with lived experience using drugs. PACHA should be a model for all policy and planning bodies addressing HIV, especially given its important leadership role in implementation of the administration’s Ending the Epidemic Plan.”

According to HHS, PACHA’s members include:

Carl Schmid, MBA (Cochair)
Deputy Executive Director
The AIDS Institute

John Wiesman, DrPH., MPH (Cochair)
Secretary of Health
Washington State Department of Health

Gregg H. Alton, JD
Chief Patient Officer
Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Wendy Holman
CEO and Cofounder
Ridgeback Biotherapeutics

Marc Meachem, M.B.A.
Head, External Affairs North America
ViiV Healthcare

Rafaelé Roberto Narváez
Cofounder and Director of Health Programs
Latinos Salud

Michael Saag, MD
Professor of Medicine
Associate Dean for Global Health, UAB School of Medicine
Director, University of Alabama at Birmingham Center for AIDS Research
University of Alabama at Birmingham, School of Medicine

John Sapero
Office Chief, HIV Prevention Program
Arizona Department of Health Services

Robert Schwartz, MD, MPH, DSc
Professor and Head, Dermatology
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Justin C. Smith, MPH
Ph.D. Candidate
Rollins School of Public Health
Emory University

Ada Stewart, RPh, MD, FAAFP, AAHIVS, HMDC
Lead Provider and HIV Specialist
Eau Claire (South Carolina) Cooperative Health Centers

To read more in POZ about Trump's plan to end HIV, click here, and to see how HIV/AIDS groups responded to the plan, click here.

[[poll|319]]

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/9-new-members-named-presidents-hiv-counciland-meeting-week