Law & Order

Fighting HIV criminalization

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Advocates from across the country are uniting to take a bite out of HIV criminalization laws. The first “HIV Is Not a Crime” conference, held June 2 to 5 in Grinnell, Iowa, offers workshops and training sessions to educate and strategize ways to successfully combat this important issue.

“Given the enthusiasm we’ve already seen, it’s obvious that community groups and organizations are eager for the tools to end HIV criminalization and discrimination in their states,” says Robert Suttle, assistant director of the Sero Project, one of the event organizers. “If we succeed in giving grassroots advocates what they’re asking for, this conference will create a response that will overcome the injustice and stigma experienced by people living with HIV.”

Also in Iowa: State legislators are rethinking a law that criminalizes HIV exposure, even when a person’s viral load is undetectable, condoms are used and no virus is transmitted. Let’s hope Hawkeye lawmakers pass an updated bill based on facts, not fears. Anything less should be a crime.

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