POS/NEG

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The Kentucky legislature passed a unique-identifier bill after a down-to-the-wire debate. The law, signed in April, was originally introduced with a names-reporting clause but was OK'd at the last minute with the confidential method instead.

Mutual of Omaha Insurance lifted its caps on claims by HIVers beginning May 1—even though the Supreme Court had ruled it was legal for other diseases to have far higher limits. The company claimed it had already been reviewing the limits when the suit was filed in 1998, causing a delay in the policy change.

The Microbicide Development Act of 2000 was introduced in Congress in March. If passed, the bill doubles the spending for research at the NIH and funds a five-year plan for basic study, clinical trials and use of these antiviral gels.

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Pfizer agreed in April to donate fluconazole for cryptococcal meningitis to South Africa, but said no way to Central American HIVers. Reps from Agua Buena Human Rights Association said the drug co called Africa a "more important area of the world."

A World Health Organization survey discovered that more than two-thirds of countries can't guarantee the safety of their blood supplies and 5 to 10 percent of HIV transmissions are due to infected blood or blood products. A fifth of the 75 mil units donated each year worldwide are not tested for HIV, hepatitis, syphilis or malaria.

Central Florida lawmakers are pushing to require an Rx to purchase syringes, reported the Orlando Sentinel, citing a "strangling" heroin epidemic. Ten states have similar laws, which harm-reduction proponents say encourage needle-sharing.

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