Clinton Outlines More of Her Plan to Fight HIV/AIDS

AIDS advocates praise her platform and push for specific funding.

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Hillary Clinton expanded on the steps she would take as president to reach an AIDS-free generation. The proposed policy was met with praise from HIV/AIDS advocates, notably the ad hoc national coalition that met with Clinton earlier this year.

As reported in a briefing update on her campaign site, HillaryClinton.com, her plan is built on three main proposals:

- Convene an "End the Epidemic" working group to adopt aggressive and attainable timelines for ending AIDS as an epidemic in the United States and globally.
- Work to fully implement and strengthen the National HIV/AIDS Strategy to meet these timelines.
- Launch a campaign to end the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV and AIDS.

The briefing contains more details about each item as well as an overview of her previous work and accomplishments in the AIDS field, which includes protecting the Ryan White Act and voting to create the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Her work is in "stark contrast to that of Donald Trump and Mark Pence," the update notes. It goes on to elaborate:

> Both Trump and Pence want to defund Planned Parenthood, a critical resource for HIV testing services. Under Mike Pence, Indiana experienced one of the worst HIV epidemics in the past two decades. Despite the fact that Indiana's recent HIV epidemic was fueled by intravenous drug use, Pence's rigid, ideological opposition to needle exchange programs stopped him from acting quickly to alleviate suffering in the hardest hit areas. One year later, counties that see skyrocketing HIV rates must foot the bill for their own needle exchanges without assistance from the state. Pence has a long record of putting his own ideological agenda before funding

> for HIV/AIDS. Pence has been called out for supporting diverting money away from the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and providing it instead to organizations performing so-called "conversion therapy" when he ran for Congress. In this campaign, Trump and Pence have not proposed a single idea for addressing the domestic and global HIV/AIDS epidemic.

AIDS service organization GMHC released a statement praising Clinton's expanded policy plan, writing that "her ambitious plan also includes convening an 'End the Epidemic' working group. As a vital source of information on HIV and AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic, GMHC fully supports measures like this that effectively engage AIDS experts, advocates, and stakeholders. There is no better way to create an ambitious, strategic and realistic plan to end the epidemic than to engage those on the ground."

And in a press release from the 70 HIV/AIDS advocates from across the nation who met with Clinton in May, they praise her AIDS platform but also push for increased funding for PEPFAR. "By committing to using U.S. power, visibility, and political will to leverage more donor funds, Secretary Clinton will be underscoring the United States' position as an international leader and a model for other nations to follow," reads the press release. "We encourage her to demonstrate leadership on this global issue now, as a clear statement that under her command the U.S. will not back away from its commitments and that we will lead the world toward ensuring the end of AIDS by 2030."

In related news, Daniel Driffin, an HIV-positive gay black man, addressed the Democratic National Convention. Watch his speech here.

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