Obama Administration Asks PEPFAR Head Mark Dybul to Resign

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President Barack Obama's administration has asked U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and administrator of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), ambassador Mark Dybul, to tender his resignation immediately, according to *CQ HealthBeat* as reported by kaisernetwork.org.

An e-mail sent to U.S. foreign aid officials on January 22 revealed that Dybul is "no longer serving" as the program's administrator and that the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator "will continue to function under the leadership of career staff until a successor is confirmed."

Last year, Congress authorized $45 billion over the next five years for PEPFAR, which fights HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in developing countries. Dybul had helmed PEPFAR under George W. Bush since 2006. In a January 9 e-mail to his staff, Dybul announced that he would continue to serve as PEPFAR administrator past Obama's January 20 inauguration for an indeterminate period of time. CQ HealthBeat reports that many global health advocates were disappointed by the announcement, arguing that PEPFAR placed too much emphasis on abstinence-based HIV prevention programs under the Bush administration.

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