Go Tell It On the Mountain

This article is from our AIDSWatch 2009 primer, which also includes:

The Holy Grail: What we're asking for on the Hill

Dear Congress: A letter to your representatives in Congress

Uniting With Might: Strategies for an effective Hill visit

Bearing Witness: AIDS advocates share their lobbying stories.

The Glory and the Power: Who's who in HIV/AIDS on the Hill

April 1, 2009

Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and begin again the work of remaking America." So said President Barack Obama at his inauguration. While the president's words were intended for the whole of the American public, they ring especially true for people living with, and those affected by, HIV.

It has been more than 25 years since a group of AIDS activists convened in Denver to write a manifesto of self-empowerment, known as "The Denver Principles," yet people with HIV still have much work to do to change the way we prevent and treat AIDS.

Which is why the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) created AIDSWatch—an annual advocacy event that assembles the HIV community on Capitol Hill to educate members of Congress about our needs. At this particularly pivotal time in American politics, it is essential that a large number of us gather to educate our lawmakers on the serious need for a national AIDS strategy, meaningful health care reform, the reintroduction of science-based prevention efforts, and increased funding for HIV/AIDS programs.

The following pages provide an "AIDSWatch Primer," including: "The Holy Grail," or what we're asking for on the Hill; "Dear Congress," a letter to send to your representatives; "Uniting With Might," strategies for an effective Hill visit; "Bearing Witness," AIDS advocates' stories from DC; and "The Glory and the Power," a chart of who's who in HIV/AIDS on the Hill.

While this information is intended to prepare the community for AIDSWatch, you don't have to go to Washington to participate. You can send the letter on page 37 (written by Anna Ford and

Rebecca Haag) to your legislators. And you can always contact any member of the government to request he or she support bills and budget levels that will improve the quality (and length) of life for those with HIV.

Two other critical ways to get involved: Support The Denver Principles Project and join NAPWA (go to napwa.org).

This year's AIDSWatch takes place April 27–29 in Washington, DC (visit napwa.org to register). It is about the work of remaking America's response to the domestic HIV/AIDS crisis; it is about the work of convincing our new administration to change policies and increase funding. The louder our collective cry, the more successful our mission. Working together with our federal government, we can stop AIDS in America. Oh yes we can. Remember: President Obama is listening. So let's pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and go tell it like it is, on the mountain of Capitol Hill.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/hiv-history-aidswatch-16287-9850