Obama Lifts HIV Travel Ban

October 30, 2009

President Barack Obama announced October 30 that the 22-year-old ban on HIV-positive visitors and immigrants entering the United States will be lifted, Reuters reports. The administration will publish a final rule eliminating the travel ban on Monday, November 2. The rule will go into effect in January 2010.

“We lead the world when it comes to helping stem the AIDS pandemic—yet we are one of only a dozen countries that still bar people with HIV from entering our own country,” said Obama while signing legislation that will extend the Ryan White CARE Act through the 2013 fiscal year. “If we want to be the global leader in combating HIV/AIDS, we need to act like it.”

In a separate statement, amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research, applauded the announcement. “We’re thrilled that the ban has been lifted based on science, reason, and human rights,” said amfAR CEO Kevin Robert Frost. “Our hope is that this decision reflects a commitment to adopting more evidence-based policies when confronting the AIDS epidemic and developing a comprehensive national AIDS strategy.”

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