



Stay Strong

In a blog post titled “2024 Vision,” NMAC executive director Paul Kawata acknowledges that efforts to reduce HIV funding were beat back in 2023 but cautions against complacency in 2024. Below is an edited excerpt.

March 25, 2024 By [Paul Kawata](#)

After 35 years in the HIV movement, I know 2024 will test our resistance like never before. We should be very concerned about potential federal budget cuts, investigations into HIV prevention and education materials, the 5th Circuit Court decision on Braidwood v. Becerra and our ability to end the HIV epidemic in America with much less funding than we had been allocated.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

HIV funding is under a coordinated attack just because it goes against some people’s values. Those on the radical right will continue to weaponize our lives with inflammatory narratives that get their base to vote. Just as they want to control women’s bodies by outlawing abortion, they want to limit HIV support because it goes against their religious beliefs.

We know too well what that looks like. It means more from the same old playbook but much greater force: sweeping anti-LGBTQ, anti-women, anti-people of color legislation with continued attacks on health care access, PrEP [pre-exposure prophylaxis], abortion and affirmative action.

Our movement thankfully beat back some of these efforts in 2023, but that’s no cause for complacency. Despite the strong policy efforts of multiple national organizations, there has never been a moment like the one in front of us.

WHAT CAN WE DO AS A COMMUNITY?

Get Out the Vote: Progressive movements must work to get the community to vote. While NMAC, as a 501(c)3 nonprofit, cannot take sides in any elections, we can, like other nonprofits, work to register voters and drive clients to the polls. While it might be hard to believe, it looks like it will be a rematch between Biden and Trump.

This election will also decide the future of many profoundly American issues that we deeply care about. It’s not only HIV but also gun control, climate change, abortion, immigration, student loans, affirmative action, Black Lives Matter, the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, gender-affirming care, equality; the list goes on. It is a fight for the soul of America.

Build the Movement: Some might question NMAC's focus on the election, but we know too well how policy affects our personhood. We also believe this is an all-hands-on-deck moment. While individually, NMAC is too small, we can continue to make a deep impact by mobilizing and uniting as part of a national movement.

Strengthen Partnerships: In this crucial year, it is also imperative to continue our collaborations with progressive federal partners to End the HIV Epidemic in the United States and with our invaluable community coalitions. We have come this far only because we have persevered together and followed the science. I can truly never overstate the value of our people's power.

2024 will be especially tough on the communities carrying the greatest burden of HIV, even after we've come so far. We're working up and down the ballot, fighting to ensure America's continued commitment to equality and justice. So now, we will not concede ground without a fight. But as we've witnessed, neither will the radical right, which is why I am so concerned.

They will call us horrible names like never before. While we know the truth, the trauma of their lies could impact our mental health and that of the people we serve. Hopefully, I'm wrong. But what I am right about is that it's time for our community to get ready to vote!

Stay strong.