



# Trump Administration Policies Undermine the Global HIV Response

An [open letter](#) by more than 200 HIV scientists, researchers and clinicians denouncing the deterioration of U.S. evidence-based policymaking.

March 7, 2018

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More than 200 HIV scientists, researchers and clinicians – including Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, a virologist and Nobel Laureate who co-discovered HIV; Linda-Gail Bekker, President of the International AIDS Society; and the HIV Medicine Association – have signed an open letter to U.S. President Donald Trump denouncing the deterioration of evidence-based policymaking during his administration.

The letter was released today on the final day of the annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston, Massachusetts. CROI is the preeminent HIV research meeting in the world and attracts more than 4,000 HIV/AIDS research leaders internationally. The conference has facilitated the presentation of important discoveries in the field and accelerated progress in HIV/AIDS research.

On this last day of the conference, scientists, researchers, and clinicians spoke out against actions taken during the Trump presidency, which has been marked by a dramatic decline of evidence-based policymaking and repeated attempts to slash funding for scientific research.

The full text of the letter and list of signatories follows:

We, the undersigned, are HIV clinicians, researchers and scientists responding to the AIDS epidemics around the world and in the U.S.

We are gravely concerned by President Trump's pursuit of policies that are out of step with evidence. The most recent examples include:

President Trump's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget proposal to the U.S. Congress that contains at least \$1.284 billion in cuts to life saving global HIV programs, when no less than \$850 million in additional funding is needed for PEPFAR, and a full \$1.35 billion in funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Analyses by UNAIDS show that a surge in global AIDS funding is needed now, in order to accelerate treatment and prevention and attain control of the epidemic by 2030.

Reinstatement and expansion of the Mexico City Policy, now called "Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance." This policy blocks U.S. funding for non-U.S. organizations that use non-U.S. government sources of funding to provide abortion counseling or referrals, advocate to decriminalize abortion or

expand abortion services. Expansion of this policy to include PEPFAR and all other health development assistance will reduce the standard of sexual and reproductive care provided to women living with and at risk for HIV.

The establishment of the Conscience and Religious Freedom Division at the Department of Health and Human Services, and the proposed rule regarding “Protecting Statutory Conscience Rights in Health Care,” an Executive action that, if enacted, would provide license for health care providers to discriminate against their patients.

Proposed cuts to the National Institutes of Health, specifically the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and the Fogarty International Center, which if enacted would slow urgently needed HIV basic and implementation research and impair work to build research capacity in partner nations to fight HIV.

Science shows us that we can defeat HIV, but not if we defy evidence.

President Trump’s misguided budget proposal, and his Administration’s attempts to scale up policies in defiance of evidence will only undermine the global AIDS response and should be stopped.

Signed,

Initial signatories:

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Nobel Prize in Medicine 2008  
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(Affiliations provided to individual endorsements are for identification purposes only.)

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181. American Sexual Health Association
182. Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
183. AVAC
184. Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
185. Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS
186. HIV Medicine Association (HIVMA)
187. Health GAP (Global Access Project)
188. India HIV Alliance
189. International Civil Society Support
190. Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)
191. International HIV/AIDS Alliance

192. International Association of Providers of AIDS Care
193. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
194. Pan African Positive Women's Coalition-Zimbabwe
195. Réseau Accès aux Médicaments Essentiels (RAME)
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197. Tendo's World (Arts in Health)
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199. Treasureland Health Builders Initiative
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