



2025 Vision: Crafting Political Strategies

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December 19, 2024 By [Paul Kawata](#)

Thank you for another year of working to end the HIV epidemic in America. We've made progress, and there is still so much to accomplish. Like so many organizations and individuals, NMAC is concerned about the future and whether we will be able to continue making progress to address the HIV epidemic in the United States and across the globe. Therefore, we are preparing to do what it takes to protect the HIV movement.

Our movement depends on federal funds for HIV research, foreign aid, prevention, treatment, care, housing, and wraparound services. Initially, NMAC wanted to wait and see before we publicly talked about the challenges; however, recent events have us concerned. The new administration has outlined several priorities, including the proposed [Department of Government Efficiency](#) (DOGE), new political appointments, and rumors of negative riders to federal legislation. In December, NMAC's board met with the NMAC senior leadership team and discussed these concerns. It was clear that we had to act quickly, and we were approved to use NMAC's reserve fund to begin creating pathways to try and influence both decision making and information sharing with the new administration. NMAC is creating a situation room to bring together communications, policy, and strategy.

We need HIV donors to step up to the plate to urgently support the policy work because there is not enough public sector funding to meet this critical need. Also, the public health safety net programs supported with federal funding must be preserved and enhanced to address the syndemics of HIV, STI and Hepatitis. It's imperative that we work to communicate the importance of these programs to a broader audience. In these uncertain times, support from our traditional friends alone may not be able to save us. Therefore, corporations and academic institutions that benefit from federally funded HIV, STI and Hepatitis programs need to be a part of the fight to save the work of CDC, NIH, PEPFAR, EHE, the Minority AIDS Initiative, the Ryan White Program, SAMHSA and HOPWA.

NMAC's Coalition for Justice and Equality Across Movements will hire staff to focus on legal options should that strategy become necessary. To be clear, because NMAC is not a legal organization, we

will work with long established legal entities when civil and human rights attacks upon our communities hinder our effort to end the epidemics. While nobody wants to use the courts, they may become a necessary tool to ensure just and fair application of law and policy for all. NMAC's Policy Division will also hire additional staff to work with the legislative and executive branches and monitor application of state legislative policies that impact our HIV work, such as HIV criminalization laws and policies, changes in Medicaid and Medicare, and PrEP access.

While NMAC will do what it takes to protect the HIV movement, multiple organizations and various strategies are necessary for a collective response in this era of great political unknowns. We all need to be ready to play our different parts and use the tools we have. As we learned in the 1960's, there is space for the Black Panthers, the NAACP, LULAC, and UNIDOS in the fight for our collective civil rights.

Have a great holiday; we all desperately need a break. Come back refreshed and ready to work! Thank you for everything!

Yours in the struggle,

Harold Phillips & Paul Kawata

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