



A Letter to Walgreens

People living with HIV and/or on PrEP want pharmacies that share their values.

March 14, 2023 By [Paul Kawata](#)

Stefano Pessina

Executive Chairman

Walgreens

200 Wilmot Road

Deerfield, IL 60015

Dear Chairman Pessina,

Walgreens' decision to not dispense abortion pills in 21 states, including four states where it remains legal, put the company in the middle of America's war on women. The fight will not be limited to mifepristone or misoprostol. People living with HIV and/or on PrEP want pharmacies that share their values. This decision says Walgreens knows better than its customers, their physicians, or even the FDA.

Corporations need to understand the complexities of stepping into the culture wars. This decision sent messages to multiple communities that we don't matter. The HIV community stands with reproductive health because we are all being demonized for political power and control. I'm not sure who thought this was a good idea, but they were wrong. Just look at Disney. They are in a war with Governor DeSantis where everyone loses.

This struggle only further divides your stores from the communities they are supposed to serve. Now consumers must add this new information about Walgreens into their calculus when choosing a pharmacy. Companies making money from HIV or the communities highly impacted by HIV need to connect the dots and understand the commercial consequences of their actions. You can't fly a rainbow flag in June and turn your back on community the other 11 months. Walgreens went from an ally to just another company that doesn't support the people who shop in their stores.

Please reconsider. Wait until after the Supreme Court rules. Walgreens jumped the gun and this position will impact the company's bottom line. What does it say about a pharmacy that will no longer dispense physician prescribed FDA approved drugs? These are decisions that should be left to customers and their doctors. What was Walgreens' senior team thinking? Please share the calculus because customers and employees want to understand. This decision puts your stock

price, senior staff, and employees at risk.

Yours in the Struggle,

Paul Kawata

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