A Message to Trump After His COVID-19 Diagnosis, From AIDS United's CEO

"Science—not politics—must lead in public health crises."

October 2, 2020 By AIDS United

Jesse Milan Jr., president and CEO of AIDS United, released the following statement responding to reports that President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump had tested positive for the coronavirus, the virus which causes COVID-19:

"Those of us living with HIV know all too well the surprise, fear and personal reflection that come with a positive test result. A positive HIV test result is no longer a death sentence thanks to effective treatment options. But severe illness and death are very possible from COVID-19.

"We would never wish illness or death on anyone, including the president and first lady. We want all who test positive for COVID to remain healthy and have access to the care they need. We also hope that while he focuses on his personal and family's health, these test results will lead the president to reflect on the importance of listening to science and following public health guidelines on COVID-19.

"President Ronald Reagan ignored the HIV epidemic in the early days. Thousands needlessly suffered and died because he ignored science. Our message has always been to let science lead. That remains true now with this news from the White House.

"It is my hope and prayer that as President Trump faces his diagnosis and works to recover, he uses this experience to reflect on his message and approach to COVID-19. This moment reinforces what the HIV community has known for nearly four decades: Science—not politics—must lead in public health crises."

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