

July 30, 2008

The Honorable José E. Serrano
U.S. House of Representatives
2227 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3216

Dear Mr. Serrano:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our sincere thanks and support for your efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis epidemic through introduction of the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008. Providing sterile syringes is a simple, cost-effective method of saving lives.

Intravenous drug use remains a major contributor to the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic. In 2006, 20% of the reported AIDS cases were attributed directly or indirectly to injection drug use. Since the beginning of the epidemic, almost 400,000 people have become infected with HIV through contaminated injection drug equipment.

By allowing federal dollars to fund Syringe Exchange Programs, the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008 will save thousands of lives. Communities will be enabled to determine which scientifically proven prevention methods are best suited to serve their own epidemic without unwarranted restrictions by the federal government. Syringe Exchange Programs already exist in 36 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, where they serve as a proven method of preventing the transmission of HIV and hepatitis C without increasing the use of injection drugs in the communities they serve. A 2005 international review and eight additional Federally funded research reports concluded that syringe exchange programs, as a part of a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy, are an effective public health intervention that reduces HIV transmission without increasing the use of illicit drugs. Moreover, these programs serve as a bridge to treatment for drug addiction.

The Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008 is a truly non-partisan issue and we encourage all Members of Congress to sign on as a co-sponsor. Again, we thank you for your continued efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and hepatitis and join you in urging the swift passage of this life-saving legislation.

Sincerely,

ACORN: A Community Resource Network
ACT UP Philadelphia
AIDS Action Baltimore, Inc.
AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts
AIDS Action Council
AIDS Alabama
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families

Lebanon, NH
Philadelphia, PA
Baltimore, MD
Boston, MA
Washington, DC
Birmingham, AL
Washington, DC

AIDS Foundation of Chicago	Chicago, IL
AIDS/HIV Health Alternatives	North Hollywood, CA
AIDS Project Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin	Milwaukee, WI
AIDS Support Network and SLO Hepatitis C Project	San Luis Obispo, CA
AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland	Cleveland, OH
AIDS Treatment Data Network	New York, NY
ALERT Health	Miami, FL
American Academy of HIV Medicine	Washington, DC
American Civil Liberties Union	Washington, DC
American Health Services	Van Nuys, CA
American Psychological Association	Washington, DC
American Social Health Association	Research Triangle, NC
amfAR The Foundation for AIDS Research	New York, NY
Arizona Hepatitis C Coalition	Phoenix, AZ
Asian American Drug Abuse Program, Inc.	Los Angeles, CA
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum	San Francisco, CA
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care	Akron, OH
Baart Programs	Los Angeles, CA
Blue Mountain Heart to Heart	Walla Walla, WA
California Hepatitis Alliance	Sacramento, CA
Caring Ambassadors Program, Inc.	Vancouver, WA
Cascade AIDS Project	Portland, OR
Center Link	Washington, DC
Chicago Recovery Alliance	Chicago, IL
ColorofChange.org	Oakland, CA
Common Ground	Santa Monica, CA
Community Education Group	Washington, DC
Community Health Action of Staten Island	New York, NY
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project	New York, NY
Community HIV/Hepatitis Advocates of Iowa Network	Des Moines, IA
Community Impact, Inc.	Yazoo City, MS
Drug Policy Alliance	New York, NY
Education for Health Choices	Sacramento, CA
Entre Hermanos	Seattle, WA
Families & Youth, Inc.	Las Cruces, NM
Florida GLBT Democratic Caucus	Ft Lauderdale, FL
F.O.U.N.D.	Los Angeles, CA
Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Inc.	New York, NY
Gay Men's Health Crisis	New York, NY
Georgia AIDS Coalition	Snellville, GA
Global Conference on Methamphetamine	London, GB
Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc	New York, NY
Harm Reduction Coalition	New York, NY
Harm Reduction Center of Southern Oregon	Roseburg, OR
Harm Reduction Institute	Indianapolis, IN

Harm Reduction Services	Sacramento, CA
Health Global Access Project	New York, NY
Hep C Connection	Denver, CO
HepCmeditations Project	Seattle, WA
Hep Help Alliance of New Jersey, Inc	Lanoka Harbor, NJ
Hepatitis C Association	Scotch Plains, NJ
Hepatitis Education Project	Seattle, WA
Hispanic Federation	New York, NY
HIVictorious, Inc.	Madison, WI
Homeless Health Care Los Angeles	Los Angeles, CA
Housing Works	Washington, DC
Howard Brown Health Center	Chicago, IL
Human Rights Campaign	Washington, DC
Interfaith Drug Policy Initiative	Washington, DC
International AIDS Empowerment	El Paso, TX
International Center for Advancement of Addiction Treatment	New York, NY
Internet Interventions Incorporated	Chelsea, MA
JRI Health	Boston, MA
Justice Policy Institute	Washington, DC
Latino Commission on AIDS	New York, NY
Legacy Community Health Services	Houston, TX
Legal Action Center	Washington, DC
Lifelong AIDS Alliance	Seattle, WA
Liver Health Today	Houston, TX
LiverHope	Minnetonka, MN
Office of Communicable Disease Control and Epidemiology, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department	Los Angeles, CA
Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center	New York, NY
Maryland Hepatitis C Action	Baltimore, MD
Maryland Viral Hepatitis Task Force	Baltimore, MD
Mendocino County AIDS Network	Ukiah, CA
Minnesota AIDS Project	Minneapolis, MN
Missouri Hepatitis C Alliance	Columbia, MO
Monmouth & Ocean County Hepatitis C Coalition, Inc.	Shrewsbury, NJ
Nashville CARES	Nashville, TN
National AIDS Fund	Washington, DC
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors	Washington, DC
NAACP: Ft. Lauderdale Branch	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
National Association of County and City Health Officials	Washington, DC
National Association of People with AIDS	Silver Spring, MD
National Black Police Association	Washington, DC
National Center for Transgender Equality	Washington, DC
National Council of Jewish Women	Washington, DC
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund	Washington, DC
National Minority AIDS Council	Washington, DC
National Stonewall Democrats	Washington, DC

National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable	Decatur, GA
Needle Exchange Emergency Distribution	Berkeley, CA
New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance	Albuquerque, NM
New York AIDS Coalition	New York, NY
New York Harm Reduction Educators, Inc.	Bronx, NY
North American Syringe Exchange Network	Tacoma, WA
November Coalition	Colville, WA
NYC AIDS Housing Network	Brooklyn, NY
Office of AIDS Administration	Oakland, CA
Ohio Inner City Support for Hepatitis C	Cleveland, OH
Okaloosa AIDS Support and Informational Services, Inc.	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Open Society Policy Center	Washington, DC
Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation	San Francisco, CA
Peer Assistance Services, Inc.	Denver, CO
Physicians for Human Rights	Washington, DC
Pierce County AIDS Foundation	Tacoma, WA
Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas, Inc.	Houston, TX
Positive Health Project, Inc.	New York, NY
Portland Overdose Prevention Project	Portland, OR
Prairie Psychological Services	Oak Park, IL
PreventionWorks!	Washington, DC
Professional Nursing Alliance	Snellville, GA
Project Inform	San Francisco, CA
Projecto Sol Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA
Reality House, Inc.	New York, NY
Recovery Options	Los Angeles, CA
Safer Alternatives thru Networking & Education	Sacramento, CA
San Francisco AIDS Foundation	San Francisco, CA
SISTAHS Today, Inc.	Miami, FL
St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction	Bronx, New York
Status C Unknown	New York, NY
Students for Sensible Drug Policy	Washington, DC
Tarzana Treatment Center	Lancaster, CA
The AIDS Institute	Washington, DC
The Center for HIV Law and Policy	New York, NY
The Drop-in Center	Denver, CO
The Episcopal Church	Washington, DC
Title II Community AIDS National Network	Washington, DC
Trans Equality LA	Los Angeles, CA
Transgender Equality Rights Initiatives	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Treatment Action Group	New York, NY
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations	Washington, DC
Upstate New York Hepatitis C Awareness Project	Delhi, NY
Urban Coalition of HIV/AIDS Prevention Services	Washington, DC
Vermont Harm Reduction Coalition	Brattleboro, VT
VOCAL-NY Users Union	Brooklyn, NY

Western Pacific Med/Corp
Women at Risk
Women's HIV Collaborative

Glendale, CA
Culver City, CA
New York, NY