

June 22, 2023

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the 44 undersigned national and international faith-based organizations, many with members working in ministries serving the needs of HIV and AIDS impacted individuals and communities, write to express our strong support for continuing the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). **We ask Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR before the end of FY2023, to ensure the continuation of its life-saving programs.**

PEPFAR was created in 2003 by President George W. Bush, who felt strongly that as a resource-rich and privileged country, the United States was morally obligated to help people with illnesses in low-income countries access medication which was otherwise unavailable to them. HIV/AIDS in the resource-limited world, particularly in southern and eastern Africa, was a stark example of such a disease.

In the 20 years since then, PEPFAR has helped to turn the tide in the global fight against AIDS, demonstrating U.S. leadership in saving lives and safeguarding human dignity of the most vulnerable people. According to the [U.S. State Department](#), PEPFAR has enabled 25 million lives to be saved, as well as “supported antiretroviral treatment for 20.1 million people... enabled 5.5 million babies to be born HIV-free to mothers living with HIV... and provided critical care and support for seven million orphans, vulnerable children, and their caregivers so they can survive and thrive.”

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) helped shape PEPFAR and have been central to its success, working together in a spirit of compassion and mercy, upholding the belief that all human life is sacred, and we are all God's children worthy of healing care. No place demonstrates our shared goals of saving lives, caring for those who are sick, and preventing the spread of this deadly disease more than Africa.

According to the World Health Organization, [Africa is disproportionately affected by HIV](#), with almost two-thirds of new infections occurring there. In some sub-Saharan African countries, faith-based organizations provide nearly half of all health services. In Kenya, nearly 40 percent of health services across the country are provided by FBOs, according to the country's 2019 PEPFAR country operational plan. With such a wide reach, FBOs are often key partners for reaching the most marginalized individuals vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

After 20 years of working with PEPFAR, many in the faith community know its programs well and depend on it for achieving HIV/AIDS pandemic control. Those with valuable experience combating the deadly disease carefully negotiated the original legislation authorizing PEPFAR. It reflects a consensus on what works in combating HIV and AIDS and how best to respond. Reauthorizing legislation over the years has built on that consensus and maintained PEPFAR's strong focus on programs of proven effectiveness in prevention, care, and treatment.

We are grateful to Congress for continuous and strong bipartisan support for reauthorizing PEPFAR every five years since 2003. We hope to continue working with PEPFAR to achieve the goal of an AIDS-free generation. We ask that Congress support this goal by reauthorizing PEPFAR before the end of FY2023.

Sincerely,

Adorers of the Blood of Christ US Region JPIC office
Africa Faith and Justice Network
African Palliative Care Association
American Muslim Health Professionals
Bread for the World
Christian Connections for International Health
CMMB
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Dominican Sisters of Peace
Eastern Deanery AIDS Relief Program (EDARP)
Faiths for Safe Water
Food for the Hungry
Franciscan Action Network
Franciscan Peace Center, Clinton, Iowa
Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart
G III Associates
IHM Sisters, Monroe, MI, HIV and AIDS Committee
INERELA + Kenya Chapter
International Network Of Religious Leaders Living With or Personally Affected By HIV and AIDS (INERELA+)
Islamic Relief Kenya
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Medical Mission Sisters, Justice Office
Missionary Oblates
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Churches
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Pax Christi USA
Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership
Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill
Sisters of Saint Anne, USA Province
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, MA
Sisters of St. Mary
SOAR!
Society of the Sacred Heart
Sojourners
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries
World Council of Churches
World Vision US

TO RESPOND PLEASE CONTACT SUSAN GUNN, MARYKNOLL OFFICE FOR GLOBAL CONCERNS, AT
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