



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE

# ACTION ALERT

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR A HUMAN LIFE AMENDMENT, INC.  
1500 Massachusetts Avenue, NW • Suite 24 • Washington, DC 20005

202.393.0703  
FAX: 202.347.1383  
NCHLA.ORG

## Retain Life-Saving Focus of PEPFAR Do Not Link AIDS Relief to Family Planning and Abortion

First enacted into law in 2003, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is due for reauthorization in 2008. It was passed with bipartisan support and has a proven record of success in saving lives.

However, on January 18, the House Foreign Affairs Committee proposed a seriously flawed reauthorization bill, the Global HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (not yet numbered). Instead of retaining the program's exclusive focus on the threat of HIV/AIDS, the bill speaks of a "dual threat" to women's lives from HIV/AIDS and pregnancy. It eliminates any earmark to ensure funding of programs that encourage abstinence and faithfulness in marriage, and calls for HIV/AIDS programs to be "integrated" and "coordinated" with family planning programs that may perform and promote abortion.

Catholic health institutions deliver approximately 25% of all HIV and AIDS care worldwide. On February 6, Bishop Thomas Wenski, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace, and Ken Hackett, President of Catholic Relief Services, wrote to the Foreign Affairs Committee, voicing their strong support for "continuing and strengthening" PEPFAR and welcoming improvements in the draft bill, such as a major increase in funding. However, they said, some of the bill's changes "are extremely troubling," especially "provisions calling for the integration and coordination of HIV and AIDS prevention, care and treatment services with 'reproductive health' and 'family planning' services" and the elimination of "funding for effective, values-based prevention programs focusing on behavioral change." These provisions jeopardize Catholic participation in PEPFAR. "Turning this essential program into a vehicle for other agendas on family planning and abortion is a serious threat to the consensus needed to enact strong and compassionate legislation this year." For the full February 6 letter and an informative fact sheet, see:

[www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/2008-02pepfar\\_cong\\_ltr.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/2008-02pepfar_cong_ltr.pdf).

The House Foreign Affairs Committee was set to mark up the reauthorization bill on February 14, but the markup has been postponed until February 27 at 9:30 a.m. Committee members should hear from their pro-life constituents. The Presidents Day District Work Period recess during the week of February 18 presents opportunities to meet with Committee members in their home districts. For a list of committee members, see: [foreignaffairs.house.gov/members.asp?committee=full&subnav=subcommittees](http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/members.asp?committee=full&subnav=subcommittees).

**ACTION:** Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee should be contacted by phone, FAX letter, or e-mail. Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard: 202-224-3121, or call a Representative's local office. For full contact information, see: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).

**MESSAGE:** "When you reauthorize the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), please retain allocated funding for abstinence and behavior change programs, and do NOT link the AIDS/HIV program to family planning and abortion. PEPFAR should keep its bipartisan focus on saving human lives. Those suffering from HIV/AIDS should not be sacrificed to the cause of abortion and population control."

**WHEN:** Markup in the House Foreign Affairs Committee has been postponed from February 14 to February 27 at 9:30 a.m. Please take action today! Thanks!  
2/12/08; updated 2/21/08