



BARACK OBAMA AND JOE BIDEN: FIGHTING HIV/AIDS WORLDWIDE

"We are all sick because of AIDS - and we are all tested by this crisis. It is a test not only of our willingness to respond, but of our ability to look past the artificial divisions and debates that have often shaped that response. When you go to places like Africa and you see this problem up close, you realize that it's not a question of either treatment or prevention - or even what kind of prevention - it is all of the above. It is not an issue of either science or values - it is both. Yes, there must be more money spent on this disease. But there must also be a change in hearts and minds, in cultures and attitudes. Neither philanthropist nor scientist, neither government nor church, can solve this problem on their own - AIDS must be an all-hands-on-deck effort."

[Barack Obama, World AIDS Day Speech, Lake Forest, CA, 12/1/06]

BARACK OBAMA AND JOE BIDEN'S PLAN TO COMBAT GLOBAL HIV/AIDS

There are an estimated 33 million people across the planet living with HIV/AIDS, including more than 1 million people in the U.S. Nearly 6,000 people die every day of AIDS. Despite advances in knowledge about HIV and effective treatment options, the rate of HIV infections has not fallen, and, in fact, is rising dramatically in certain racial and ethnic groups. Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe that we must do more to fight the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, as well as malaria and tuberculosis. In 2006, Barack Obama traveled to Kenya and, along with his wife Michelle, took an HIV/AIDS test to encourage African men and women to be tested for the disease. Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe in working across party lines to combat this epidemic. Barack Obama has worked in both the Illinois and U.S. Senate to increase awareness and to promote greater investment for HIV/AIDS in America and abroad. As president, he will continue to be a global leader in the fight against AIDS.

HIV/AIDS IN AMERICA

Implement a National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Barack Obama has pledged that, in the first year of his presidency, he will develop and begin to implement a comprehensive national HIV/AIDS strategy that includes all federal agencies. The strategy will be designed to reduce HIV infections, increase access to care and reduce HIV-related health disparities. His strategy will include measurable goals, timelines and accountability mechanisms. Obama passed legislation in Illinois to require public service announcements promoting HIV/AIDS screening. As president, Obama will continue to increase awareness of the disease.

Fix the Nation's Health Care System: Nearly 46 million Americans are uninsured in this country. Barack Obama is committed to signing universal health care legislation by the end of his first term in office that ensures all Americans have high-quality, affordable health care coverage. The Obama-Biden health plan will save a typical American family up to \$2,500 every year on medical expenditures by providing affordable, comprehensive and portable health coverage for every American; modernizing the U.S. health care system to contain spiraling health care costs and improve the quality of patient care; and promoting prevention and strengthening public health to prevent disease and protect against natural and man-made disasters. The Obama-Biden plan will ensure that people living with HIV have access to lifesaving treatment and care.

Bring Medicaid Coverage to Low-Income, HIV-Positive Americans: Obama is a cosponsor of the Early Treatment for HIV Act, which would help provide Medicaid coverage to more low-income, HIV-positive

Americans. The bill would also increase the number of people who receive the medications necessary to treat HIV infections.

Fight Disparities in Minority Communities: HIV/AIDS has hit some communities harder than others. For example, while African Americans make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 49 percent of new HIV/AIDS cases. AIDS is the leading cause of death of African American women aged 25-34, and the third leading cause of death of African American men in the same age group. In 2005, 64 percent of women living with HIV/AIDS were black. In our nation's capital alone, African Americans account for 81 percent of new reports of HIV cases and about 86 percent of people with AIDS. Barack Obama and Joe Biden are committed to targeting resources to promote innovative HIV/AIDS testing initiatives in minority communities and partnering with a wide-range of community leaders from churches to community organizations. But we must also tackle the scourge of poverty where HIV and AIDS proliferate. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will continue to fight poverty and homelessness, key drivers of this epidemic. We need to better target care for people in communities of color, where the disease is moving most quickly. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will tackle the root causes of health disparities by addressing differences in access to health insurance coverage and promoting prevention and public health, both of which play a major role in addressing disparities. They will also challenge the medical system to eliminate inequities in health care through quality measurement and reporting, implementation of effective interventions such as patient navigation programs and diversification of the health workforce.

Improve Quality of Life for Those Living with HIV/AIDS: Barack Obama is a strong supporter of the Ryan White Care Act (RWCA), which provides critical access to life-saving treatment and care for over half a million low-income Americans with HIV/AIDS. The RWCA is one of the largest sources of federal funds for primary health care and support services for patients with HIV/AIDS. The bill was named after Ryan White, an Indiana teenager whose courageous struggle with HIV/AIDS helped educate the nation. Throughout the recent reauthorization of the RWCA, Obama worked closely with RWCA service providers, the Chicago Department of Public Health, and the Illinois Department of Public Health to analyze and find ways to improve the program for Illinois and for the nation. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will continue to protect the multifaceted care upon which RWCA beneficiaries depend.

Promote AIDS Prevention: In addition to assuring access to treatment, Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe we need to increase the focus on preventing new infections. We cannot keep pace with treatment needs if we don't also focus on prevention. This means pursuing a strategy that relies on sound science and builds on what works. Barack Obama and Joe Biden support comprehensive sex education that is age-appropriate. They support increasing federal appropriations for science-based HIV prevention programs. They support the JUSTICE Act, which would prevent transmission of HIV within the incarcerated population. They also support legislation that would lift the ban on federal funding for needle exchange as a strategy to reduce HIV transmission among injection drug users and their partners and children.

Assure Adequate and Safe Housing for Those Living With HIV: Barack Obama and Joe Biden support increased funding for Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) and other pertinent housing programs. These programs aim to assure that adequate and safe housing is available for all disabled and low-income people with HIV/AIDS in the U.S.

Expand Funding for Research: Barack Obama and Joe Biden will expand funding for research, especially for prevention options including a vaccine and microbicides. Microbicides are a class of products currently under development that women apply topically to prevent transmission of HIV and other infections. Barack Obama led an effort with Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and others to introduce the Microbicide Development Act, which will accelerate the development of products that empower women in the battle against AIDS. In the United States, the percentage of women diagnosed with AIDS has quadrupled over the last 20 years. Today, women account for more than one quarter of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses.

Expand Access to HIV/AIDS Testing for Pregnant Women: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that voluntary HIV screening be included in the routine panel of prenatal screening tests for all pregnant women. In the Illinois State Senate, Barack Obama sponsored the successful Prenatal HIV Prevention Act, which ensures that every health care professional who provides health care services to a pregnant woman will provide HIV counseling and offer HIV testing. He also passed legislation in Illinois requiring that insurance coverage under the Illinois Insurance Code, Health Maintenance Organization Act and the Voluntary Health Services Plans Act include coverage of prenatal HIV testing.

GLOBAL HIV/AIDS

Provide Universal Access for the Global Fight Against HIV/AIDS: Barack Obama and Joe Biden know that in the 21st century, progress must not just mean political freedom – it must mean freedom from fear and freedom from want. Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe that a comprehensive, long-term approach to combating HIV/AIDS is an important investment in our common security and humanity. They have pledged to provide at least \$50 billion by 2013 for the global fight against HIV/AIDS, including our fair share of the Global Fund, in order to at least double the number of HIV-positive people on treatment and continue to provide treatments to one-third of all those who desperately need them. This funding will allow the U.S. to meet its commitments that have been flat-funded by the Bush Administration, which includes expanding existing programs to help the millions of children orphaned and made vulnerable by AIDS, increasing the number of health care workers by at least one million, preventing violence against women and girls, and improving health care systems so that U.S. assistance can be fully and effectively utilized.

Reauthorize and Revise PEPFAR: The U.S. has dramatically increased funding for global HIV and AIDS programs through the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), but the program has faced controversy. Barack Obama believes that our first priority should be to implement the recently signed President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), legislation Barack Obama long-supported, to ensure that best practices – not ideology – to drive funding for HIV/AIDS programs.

Strengthen Health Care Infrastructure: Barack Obama and Joe Biden are committed to increasing U.S. investments in the capacity building needed to ensure that poor countries are able to develop the health care infrastructure necessary to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, promote basic health care, reduce the spread of malaria and TB, and prevent and, if necessary, contain the spread of avian flu and other pandemics.

Increase Contribution to the Global Fund: Barack Obama and Joe Biden support increasing U.S. contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, malaria, and TB so that our assistance is coordinated with aid provided by other governments and private donors and so that the burden on poor countries is reduced.

Increase Access to Affordable Drugs: Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe that people in developing countries living with HIV/AIDS should have access to safe, affordable generic drugs to treat HIV/AIDS. They will break the stranglehold that a few big drug and insurance companies have on these life-saving drugs. They support the rights of sovereign nations to access quality-assured, low-cost generic medication to meet their pressing public health needs under the WTO’s Declaration on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Barack Obama and Joe Biden also support the adoption of humanitarian licensing policies that ensure medications developed with U.S. taxpayer dollars are available off-patent in developing countries.

Invest in Clean Water: As more people have access to affordable drugs, the developed world must also invest in the clean water necessary to ensure that life saving drugs can be taken. More than 1 billion people lack access to clean water, and that number will increase with the impact of climate change. Through increasing funding by up to \$1.3 billion annually and innovative programs like “play pumps,” Barack Obama and Joe Biden will expand access to clean water and sanitation.

Close the Education Deficit: Worldwide, an estimated 100 million children – including nearly 60 million girls – are not attending school. By 2010, getting these children into school could cost \$10 billion annually. To meet our share of that sum, Barack Obama and Joe Biden will invest at least \$2 billion in a Global Education Fund.

Achieve the Millennium Development Goals: As president, Barack Obama will double U.S. foreign assistance from \$25 billion per year to \$50 billion per year to ensure the U.S. does its share to meet the Millennium Development Goals, including halving the number of people who die of tuberculosis and/or are affected by malaria. In 2005, Obama cosponsored the International Cooperation to Meet the Millennium Development Goals Act. Barack Obama will target this new spending toward strategic goals, including helping the world's weakest states to build healthy and educated communities, reduce poverty, develop markets, and generate wealth. He will also help weak states to fight terrorism, halt the spread of deadly weapons, and build the health care infrastructure needed to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS as well as detect and contain outbreaks of avian influenza.

Invest in Comprehensive Poverty Reduction to Help Fight All Deadly Disease: In addition to the havoc wreaked by HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria continue to kill millions and undercut economic productivity in the developing world. Investments in fighting HIV/AIDS cannot come at the expense of investments in other key development challenges like preventing disease and improving child health and survival. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will ensure the United States is committed to a comprehensive anti-poverty program.

Reduce Debt of Developing Nations: Developing nations are amassing tremendous amounts of foreign debt that limit their economic development and make investments in public health, education, and infrastructure extremely difficult. Debt in Sub-Saharan Africa stands at \$235 billion, 44 percent of the region's gross domestic product and an increase of 33 percent since 1990. Barack Obama and Joe Biden would work with other developed nations and multilateral institutions to cancel remaining onerous debt while pushing reforms to keep developing nations from slipping into fiscal ruin. Barack Obama and Joe Biden also would better coordinate trade and development policies to use the full range of America's economic power to help developing nations reap the benefits of the global trading system. Obama cosponsored the Multilateral Debt Relief Act of 2005 to provide multilateral debt relief to Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

PRAISE FOR BARACK OBAMA'S EFFORTS

"Today, Senator Obama laid out his vision to fight extreme poverty and global disease and make the world a more stable and secure place for future generations. Extreme poverty takes the life of a child every three seconds. The next president will have an opportunity like never before to save millions of lives and change this monumental tragedy into a monumental triumph. ONE calls on all presidential candidates to take a stand on these critical issues.

...ONE members are excited to hear Senator Obama and the other presidential contenders speak out and offer plans on global disease and extreme poverty. For months now, ONE members have been following the candidates on the campaign trail, asking them questions on how they will lead America and take on these critical issues. ONE thanks Senator Obama and other candidates who have provided some concrete answers, and we are eager to hear more in the days and months ahead." David Lane, President & CEO, ONE; 11/27/2007

"Only Senator Obama has presented a specific spending plan that would not only increase AIDS spending but also provide the increase needed overall for the US anti-poverty effort to have a holistic impact. The call for the U.S. to dedicate just one percent of its budget to fighting global poverty is a reasonable and practical proposal. Senator Obama has shown he understands why reaching this goal is both a moral imperative and in the interest of the United States." Paul Zeitz, Executive Director of the Global AIDS Alliance Fund

"Senator Obama has long been a leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS at home and abroad. Obama's plan to fight AIDS includes a commitment to invest at least \$50 billion over 5 years for intensified international prevention, care and treatment efforts. He also understands the crucial importance of investing in building adequate healthcare infrastructure, improving access to education especially for girls, and reducing poverty as key elements of any effective global strategy to tackle HIV/AIDS. When Barack and Michelle publicly took AIDS tests in Kenya last year, they sent the message to millions that people with AIDS deserve compassion and treatment not stigmatization. America, under President Obama, will play a crucial role in helping defeat the AIDS pandemic that afflicts an estimated 33 million human beings." Dr. Susan Rice, Former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (1997-2001); Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs, the National Security Council, the White House (1995-1997); Director for International Organizations and Peacekeeping, National Security Council (1993-1995)

"Senator Obama has also added his voice to the growing chorus of African American leaders to create a mass black mobilization to respond to the devastating impact of the AIDS epidemic on Black people. We salute the Senator for taking the lead among presidential contenders in acknowledging the disproportionate impact this epidemic is having on Black communities and pledging to focus on ending the AIDS epidemic in our communities. That is exactly the kind of leadership Black people should expect from our next president. It is time for all the presidential candidates to follow Senator Obama's lead and come to our communities and share with us what they are going to do about AIDS in our communities to warrant our vote." Phill Wilson, CEO and Founder, Black AIDS Institute

"I see nothing but upsides for the fight against HIV in Senator Obama's visit (to Kenya). The senator's emphasis on underlying cultural, social and economic issues like stigma and women's rights is right on target." Drew Altman, President and CEO, Kaiser Family Foundation

"Fighting AIDS is a moral obligation that goes beyond partisan politics. Iowans want to know, in detail, how the candidates would ensure America keeps its promises, including in the area of HIV/AIDS. Senator Obama has made clear how we can do that while at the same time ensuring the US response to poverty is broad and effective." Rev. Randy Gehring, Pastor in Ames, Iowa and a member of Iowans for AIDS Action

"I am thrilled to see that Senator Obama is coming out so clearly in favor of a comprehensive and fully-funded approach to global poverty. Children have been overlooked when it comes to the AIDS crisis, and it's great to see that Obama has a strong proposal for what to do about it." Christina D'Allesandro, Steering Committee of New Hampshire Fights AIDS

"Senator Obama's plan includes many of the recommendations that people living with HIV/AIDS and AIDS experts have made to all the candidates in both parties: universal health care and effective science-based prevention – including needle exchange – in the US; at least \$50B to fight global AIDS and ensure universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support; expanded research and new efforts to fight AIDS stigma. If we do these things, the next President has a shot at actually ending AIDS as a killer pandemic. We'd like to see the detail and the commitment demonstrated by Obama from every candidate – and we hope they'll all pay attention to the recommendations at AIDSVote.org." Christine Campbell, Director of National Advocacy and Organizing for Housing Works

"U.S. Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois told more than 2,000 evangelical leaders in Orange County on Friday that he 'respectfully but unequivocally' disagrees with those who oppose condom distribution to fight the AIDS pandemic. . . Obama drew a standing ovation from the 2,072 pastors and others who came from 39 states and 18 nations." Los Angeles Times, December 2, 2006

"In a show of political unity, Obama took an AIDS test with a potential White House rival on the Republican side Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas. . . In another show of bipartisanship, the Illinois senator said President George W. Bush does not get enough credit for committing \$15 million against HIV and AIDS over five years."

Associated Press, December 1, 2006

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