

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 18, 2002

President George W. Bush  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush,

As members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we are writing to draw your attention to the growing spread of HIV/AIDS throughout the developing world. It would be impossible to overstate the devastation caused to date by the global AIDS pandemic, or the urgency of the need for a greater response from the United States and the global community. With 42 million people currently living with HIV/AIDS - 29.4 million of them in Sub-Saharan Africa -- 14 million children already orphaned by the disease, and 70 million more people expected to die by 2020, we must do more now. We must respond on an appropriate scale to address the greatest plague in recorded history.

The United States, as the world's wealthiest nation, must take greater action by contributing its fair share, and in doing so we can help galvanize the global response that we so desperately need. As you prepare to travel to Africa in January, and as you prepare your budget for fiscal year 2004, you have a remarkable opportunity to demonstrate United States leadership against AIDS at a moment when the world will be watching. We urge you to launch a major new US initiative to fight AIDS, as well as tuberculosis and malaria. TB is the leading killer of people with HIV, claiming 2 million lives each year despite the existence of an effective and inexpensive cure, while malaria kills nearly one million people each year, most of them young children in Africa.

An expanded US Initiative to fight AIDS must:

- \* Provide at least \$2.5 billion for implementation of global AIDS programs in 2004, as well as additional funds to combat TB and malaria. At least 50% of this should go to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- \* Prioritize treatment, as well as prevention and care, for those affected--including an expanded mother-to-child transmission initiative that would detect and treat entire families, and including funding and personnel as needed to implement the WHO call to treat three million people with HIV by 2005.
- \* Promote developing country access to sustainable supplies of affordable medicines for AIDS and other diseases such as opportunistic infections in accordance with the Doha Ministerial Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health and oppose any attempts to limit the scope of the Declaration.
- \* Expand programs for children orphaned by AIDS.
- \* Seek debt cancellation for impoverished countries, so they can invest in poverty reduction and AIDS programs.

Most importantly, a US initiative should consist of new monies and policies that complement existing US-supported programs and are additional to the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). The MCA, however, also must help meet the Millennium Development Goal of halting and reversing the spread of these diseases.

We cannot win the war against AIDS without greater financial resources and a clear plan of action for the United States. Programs around the world are ready to scale up prevention, treatment, and care to save lives now, and to develop the systems needed to save tens of millions more in the future. Each day we delay in mounting a comprehensive - and compassionate - response to the global AIDS and TB pandemics, the cost in human, social, and economic terms grows. You will have our strong support and the support of the American people for a bold new initiative to save families and communities affected by the AIDS crisis, to extend the parent-child relationship, and to secure the future of young people.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee, M.C.



Maxine Waters, M.C.



Donna Christian-Christensen, M.C.



Danny K. Davis, M.C.



Edolphus Towns, M.C.



Robert Scott, M.C.



Charles Rangel, M.C.



Elijah Cummings, M.C.



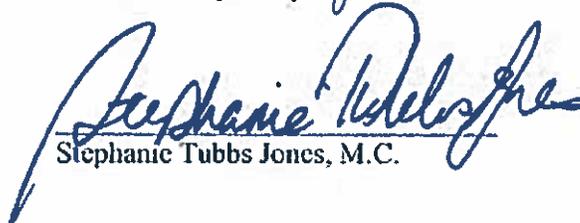
Julius Carson, M.C.



William "Lacy" Clay, Jr., M.C.



Juanita Millender-McDonald, M.C.



Stephanie Tubbs Jones, M.C.

Eddie Betrice Johnson  
Eddie Betrice Johnson, M.C.

Sheila Jackson-Lee  
Sheila Jackson-Lee, M.C.

Bobby Rush  
Bobby Rush, M.C.

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Eleanor Holmes Norton, M.C.

Carolyn C. Kilpatrick  
Carolyn Kilpatrick, M.C.

Donald W. Payne  
Donald Payne, M.C.

Diane E. Watson  
Diane E. Watson, M.C.

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Sanford Bishop, M.C.

Gregory Meeks  
Gregory Meeks, M.C.

Bennie Thompson  
Bennie Thompson, M.C.

Major Owens  
Major Owens, M.C.

Melvin L. Watt  
Melvin Watt, M.C.

Harold Ford, Jr.  
Harold Ford, Jr., M.C.

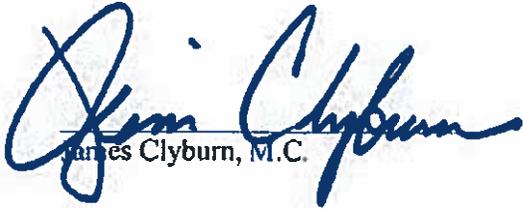
Corrine Brown  
Corrine Brown, M.C.

John Conyers  
John Conyers, M.C.

Chaka Fattah  
Chaka Fattah, M.C.

Alcee Hastings  
Alcee Hastings, M.C.

Jesse Jackson, Jr.  
Jesse Jackson, Jr., M.C.

  
James Clyburn, M.C.

  
Albert R. Wynn, M.C.