

PRESIDENTIAL

October 10, 1997

ADVISORY
COUNCIL ON
HIV/AIDS

The Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW Suite 615F
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Madam Secretary:

Thank you, for meeting with members of the Council and me during my recent visit to Washington, D.C. The Council was encouraged by your commitment to work with the CDC finalize content restriction on prevention materials and HIV+ health care worker guidelines. In addition we look forward to your collaboration with Sandy Thurman to promote a comprehensive strategy for the AIDS Vaccine Initiative as well as an effective dialogue to address issues relating to Medicaid expansion and HIV/AIDS in prisons.

As we discussed during our meeting, the Council is extremely concerned by the amendment included in the House Appropriations Bill which will eliminate your authority to lift the prohibition on federal funds for needle exchange program. While the final outcome of that amendment will be decided in conference committee, we continue to look to you for strong leadership on this issue. Of course, as members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, we are committed to working with you to ensure that you retain your authority and ultimately lift the restriction on federal funds for needle exchange programs.

Finally, I am extremely hopeful that we will work closely with you to provide an accurate reflection of the Administration's commitment regarding our concerns. I remain optimistic that the December progress report put forth by the Council will be favorable, but it will not happen without your leadership.

Please provide me any information or feedback that would ensure an accurate reflection of the Administration's response to our concerns. You can reach me at (301) 652-9655 or Daniel Montoya at (202) 632-1204.

Sincerely,

[original signed October 10, 1997]

R.Scott Hitt, M.D.
Chair

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