



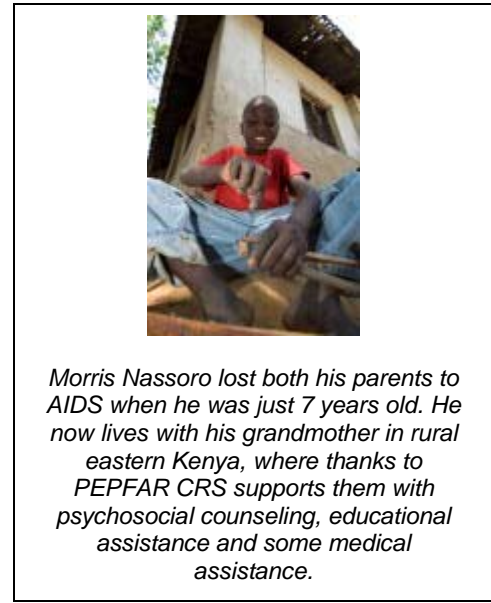
April 4, 2008

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSES BIPARTISAN GLOBAL AIDS BILL
SENATE TO CONSIDER AIDS BILL NEXT**

UPDATE: Thanks to your efforts and those of many advocates around the country, the House this week passed H.R. 5501, the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008, the bill that reauthorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Rep. Christopher Smith (R-NJ) highlighted the major contributions of faith-based organizations in efforts to address the pandemic and specifically mentioned Catholic Relief Services' 250 programs in 52 countries as an example. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) praise the bipartisan consensus that led to significant improvements in the bill that passed.

TAKE ACTION NOW! Check here (<http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2008/roll158.xml>) to find out if your Representative supported the Global AIDS bill, H.R. 5501, which reauthorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Please let those who supported the bill know that you appreciate the spirit of bipartisan consensus that led to significant improvements in the bill. Visit the CRS Action Center (<http://actioncenter.crs.org>) to send a message now.

WHY IS PEPFAR IMPORTANT? Because of PEPFAR, CRS has saved more than 100,000 lives through antiretroviral treatment and provides HIV care and support services for another 250,000 HIV positive people. Men and women who were on the brink of death are now leading normal lives, caring for their children and contributing to their communities because they are on antiretroviral therapy. More than 60,000 orphaned children are being cared for, going to school and embracing a bright future. Nearly 350,000 youth have been educated about risky behaviors and how abstinence-until-marriage and mutual fidelity within marriage is the most effective way to prevent HIV infections. [Visit the CRS website \(http://crs.org/public-policy/hiv_aids.cfm\)](http://crs.org/public-policy/hiv_aids.cfm) for more information about PEPFAR.



Morris Nassoro lost both his parents to AIDS when he was just 7 years old. He now lives with his grandmother in rural eastern Kenya, where thanks to PEPFAR CRS supports them with psychosocial counseling, educational assistance and some medical assistance.

WHAT DOES PEPFAR HAVE TO DO WITH MY FAITH? Our faith tradition as Catholics requires us to care for "the least of these" and to uphold the life and dignity of all people. People affected by HIV or suffering from AIDS need and deserve our love and care just as Jesus called on us to care for those who are "hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison." Catholic social teaching instructs us to live in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world. Pope John Paul II reminded us that we must commit ourselves to this common good: "That is to say the good of all and each individual, because we are all really responsible for all."

WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S POSITION ON PEPFAR? USCCB and CRS praise the bipartisan consensus that led to significant improvements in the bill that the House passed. The House strengthened HIV and AIDS programs by authorizing \$50 billion in funding over five years, increasing nutrition resources needed for effective treatment, improving the health care capacity of host governments, and expanding HIV and AIDS treatment and prevention.

WHERE DOES PEPFAR STAND NOW? Next the Senate will consider its own PEPFAR reauthorization bill, S. 2731, passed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in March. USCCB and CRS will continue to seek improvements to the Senate bill and to monitor any attempts to weaken it and will alert you for appropriate action.

For more information, contact:

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