



International Justice and Peace
3211 4th Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017
Tel. (202) 541-3160 Fax (202) 541-3339



228 West Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
Tel. (410) 625-2220 Fax (410) 685-1635

March 7, 2008

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Relief Services, we welcome the House Committee on Foreign Affairs' approval of H.R. 5501, which reauthorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Since its inception in 2003, PEPFAR has saved millions of lives through its care, treatment and prevention activities. Catholic Relief Services alone has helped save over 100,000 lives through antiretroviral treatment and continues to provide care and support services for another 250,000 HIV positive people thanks to funding from PEPFAR.

We are particularly pleased that H.R. 5501 passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with the kind of bipartisan support that characterized the original passage of PEPFAR in 2003. We are also pleased with the authorized \$50 billion funding level, which will allow the program to save many more lives. We believe that the addition of nutrition activities, increased training of health care workers, and strengthening of efforts to combat tuberculosis and malaria will also greatly improve the program.

Lastly, we reiterate our support for an HIV prevention program that gives priority to behavior change, understood as abstinence, fidelity within marriage, monogamy, delay of sexual debut and partner reduction, as critical to reducing HIV prevalence. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Relief Services also support maintaining PEPFAR's focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care, rather than diverting this successful program into family planning and reproductive health activities.

As approved by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, H.R. 5501 is a positive step toward ensuring that saving lives continues to be the central focus of PEPFAR. We ask that when the full House considers H.R. 5501 you preserve the bipartisan consensus reflected in the House Foreign Affairs Committee bill and the features of PEPFAR that have saved so many lives.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Wenski".

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski
Bishop of Orlando
Chairman, Committee on International
Justice and Peace

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Hackett".

Mr. Ken Hackett
President
Catholic Relief Services