



# 35 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP & PROGRESS ON HIV/AIDS

Since her first day in Congress, combating HIV and AIDS has been a priority for Congresswoman Pelosi, who stated in her first speech in Congress on June 9, 1987, that “...now we must take leadership of course in the crisis of AIDS.”

Armed with the lessons of San Francisco’s model of community-based care, Congresswoman Pelosi worked to accelerate development of an HIV vaccine, expand access to Medicaid for people living with HIV, and increase funding for the Ryan White CARE program, the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative and other research, care, treatment, prevention and search for a cure initiatives vital to people living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS.

Pelosi participated in some of the earliest meetings for the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, sewing her own patch for the flower girl in her wedding who died of AIDS, and fighting to secure the needed permits from the National Park Service so that the AIDS memorial quilt could be displayed on the National Mall. In 2020, Pelosi aided the effort to return the AIDS Memorial Quilt to San Francisco, under the stewardship of the National AIDS Memorial, with the project’s archives transferred to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, allowing for greater public access.

Knowing that ‘housing is health care,’ in 1989, Representative Pelosi joined Representatives Jim McDermott and Charles Schumer to introduce the landmark bill that created the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program to ensure stable, affordable housing for low-income people living with HIV/AIDS. In the years since, Pelosi has secured robust resources for the HOPWA program, including record funding levels in each of the last four years.

In 1996, Pelosi successfully spearheaded the passage of legislation designating San Francisco’s AIDS Memorial Grove, located in Golden Gate Park, as a national memorial of the United States. Pelosi has celebrated multiple anniversaries of her service representing San Francisco by volunteering at the Grove.

Disease knows no borders and boundaries. As the former Ranking Democrat on the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, Pelosi led the efforts to boost U.S. funding for our bilateral AIDS initiatives, which had been in desperate need of international attention and U.S. funding. In 2000, she led the effort in the House Appropriations Committee to provide the first U.S. contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. She also authored legislation to provide incentives for research on vaccines against HIV, as well as tuberculosis and malaria.

As Democratic Leader, Pelosi supported President Bush’s bilateral PEPFAR (President’s Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief) initiative. During her first two terms as Speaker of the House, working with Presidents Bush and Obama, she successfully fought to more than double bilateral funding for global AIDS, increasing the U.S. contribution to the Global Fund by twofold.

More recently, Speaker Pelosi successfully fought against President Trump when his budgets proposed the largest cuts ever to global HIV/AIDS programs. Pelosi secured and protected an increase to PEPFAR and the Global Fund and preserved the United States’ commitment to its 33 percent share to the Global Fund. And with the upcoming Global 7th Replenishment Conference to be held in the United States this year, Pelosi is working with State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara Lee to increase the U.S.’s commitment to \$2

billion annually for the next three years. These initiatives have saved the lives of millions and provided testing, counseling and better care to some of the most vulnerable men, women, and children around the world.

Before her time as Speaker, as a member of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Pelosi made HIV funding a top priority and successfully pushed for major increased investments in domestic HIV prevention, care, treatment and research. She led efforts in the House for evidence-based HIV prevention policies and authored legislation to expand Medicaid eligibility to people living with HIV.

During her first two terms as Speaker of House, domestic funding for HIV/AIDS was increased by over half a billion dollars, and the travel ban for people with HIV/AIDS was successfully lifted.

Pelosi spearheaded the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which has provided significant benefits for those with HIV/AIDS. While before the ACA many low-income individuals with HIV did not qualify for Medicaid until they became disabled, the ACA's Medicaid expansion dramatically increased access to Medicaid for people with HIV. Today, more than 40 percent are covered under the program. The Affordable Care Act ended discrimination based on pre-existing conditions including HIV/AIDS, improved Medicare Part D for people participating in ADAP, and ended annual and lifetime caps on health benefits.

More recently, Pelosi supported funding for the Ending the Epidemic Initiative targeting investment to reduce the number of new HIV infections in the United States by 75 percent by 2025, and then by at least 90 percent by 2030. In the last three appropriations funding bills, she helped secured in over \$1 billion in new funds for this initiative. With the COVID pandemic endangering people living with HIV and AIDS and straining efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic, Pelosi negotiated and passed the CARES Act, which included \$90 million in Ryan White funding and \$65 million for HOPWA.

Now, Speaker Pelosi is working with the Biden/Harris Administration to combat HIV/AIDS at home and abroad: protecting and enhancing the Affordable Care Act, fighting to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030, updating the nation's comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategy to aggressively reduce new HIV cases and end racial disparities in HIV, protecting the gains in the global epidemic as COVID-19 threatens health systems, and increasing access to treatment and eliminating inequitable access to services and supports.