

PRESIDENTIAL

ADVISORY December 7, 1997

COUNCIL ON

HIV/AIDS

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS urgently recommends, based on an examination of extensive scientific research, that a determination that needle exchange programs effectively reduce HIV transmission *and* do not increase drug use be made by Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala immediately. The Council has made several recommendations of this nature during the past two years to no avail. The most recent Congressionally imposed moratorium prevents federal funding of any programs until April 1, 1998, and requires the Secretary to establish a framework for the implementation and funding of any such programs. The guidelines for needle exchange programs as part of a continuum of HIV prevention and substance abuse treatment programs, should be developed during the remaining months of the moratorium in consultation with affected communities and exchange service providers. The debate at this time should no longer be *if*, but *how*, needle exchange programs should be established. The Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS strongly recommends that the determination by the Secretary on this issue occur before January 27, 1998.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

[original signed on December 7, 1997]

R. Scott Hitt, M.D.
Chair

Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS Members:

R. Scott Hitt, M.D., Chair
Stephen N. Abel, D.D.S.
Terje Anderson
Regina Aragon, M.P.P.
Judith A. Billings, Esq.
Charles Blackwell
Nicholas Bollman
Jerry Cade, M.D.
Lynne M. Cooper, D. Min
Rabbi Joseph Edelheit
Robert Fogel, Esq.
Debra Fraser-Howze, M.P.A.
Kathleen Gerus
Phyllis Greenberger, M.S.W.
Nilsa Gutierrez, M.D., M.P.H.
Bob Hattoy
B. Thomas Henderson, Esq.
Michael Isbell, Esq.
Ronald Johnson
Jeremy Landau
Alexandra Mary Levine, M.D.
Steve Lew
Miguel Milanés
Helen M. Miramontes, M.S.N., R.N., F.A.A.N.
Rev. Alagracia Perez
Robert M. Rankin, M.D., M.P.H.
H. Alexander Robinson, Esq.
Debbie Runnions
Sean Sasser
Benjamin Schatz, Esq.
Richard W. Stafford
Denise Stokes
Charles Quincy Troupe
Bruce G. Weniger, M.D., M.P.H.