July 30, 2008

The Honorable José E. Serrano
U.S. House of Representatives
2227 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-3216

Dear Mr. Serrano:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our sincere thanks and support for your efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS and hepatitis epidemic through introduction of the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008. Providing sterile syringes is a simple, cost-effective method of saving lives.

Intravenous drug use remains a major contributor to the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic. In 2006, 20% of the reported AIDS cases were attributed directly or indirectly to injection drug use. Since the beginning of the epidemic, almost 400,000 people have become infected with HIV through contaminated injection drug equipment.

By allowing federal dollars to fund Syringe Exchange Programs, the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008 will save thousands of lives. Communities will be enabled to determine which scientifically proven prevention methods are best suited to serve their own epidemic without unwarranted restrictions by the federal government. Syringe Exchange Programs already exist in 36 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, where they serve as a proven method of preventing the transmission of HIV and hepatitis C without increasing the use of injection drugs in the communities they serve. A 2005 international review and eight additional Federally funded research reports concluded that syringe exchange programs, as a part of a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy, are an effective public health intervention that reduces HIV transmission without increasing the use of illicit drugs. Moreover, these programs serve as a bridge to treatment for drug addiction.

The Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2008 is a truly non-partisan issue and we encourage all Members of Congress to sign on as a co-sponsor. Again, we thank you for your continued efforts to fight HIV/AIDS and hepatitis and join you in urging the swift passage of this life-saving legislation.

Sincerely,

ACORN: A Community Resource Network
Lebanon, NH

ACT UP Philadelphia
Philadelphia, PA

AIDS Action Baltimore, Inc.
Baltimore, MD

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts
Boston, MA

AIDS Action Council
Washington, DC

AIDS Alabama
Birmingham, AL

AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families
Washington, DC
Harm Reduction Services
Health Global Access Project
Hep C Connection
HepCmeditations Project
Hep Help Alliance of New Jersey, Inc
Hepatitis C Association
Hepatitis Education Project
Hispanic Federation
HIVictorious, Inc.
Homeless Health Care Los Angeles
Housing Works
Howard Brown Health Center
Human Rights Campaign
Interfaith Drug Policy Initiative
International AIDS Empowerment
International Center for Advancement of Addiction Treatment
Internet Interventions Incorporated
JRI Health
Justice Policy Institute
Latino Commission on AIDS
Legacy Community Health Services
Legal Action Center
Lifelong AIDS Alliance
Liver Health Today
LiverHope
Office of Communicable Disease Control and Epidemiology,
    Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
Lower East Side Harm Reduction Center
Maryland Hepatitis C Action
Maryland Viral Hepatitis Task Force
Mendocino County AIDS Network
Minnesota AIDS Project
Missouri Hepatitis C Alliance
Monmouth & Ocean County Hepatitis C Coalition, Inc.
Nashville CARES
National AIDS Fund
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
NAACP: Ft. Lauderdale Branch
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of People with AIDS
National Black Police Association
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Council of Jewish Women
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Minority AIDS Council
National Stonewall Democrats

Sacramento, CA
New York, NY
Denver, CO
Seattle, WA
Lanoka Harbor, NJ
Scotch Plains, NJ
Seattle, WA
New York, NY
Madison, WI
Los Angeles, CA
Washington, DC
Chicago, IL
Washington, DC
Washington, DC
El Paso, TX
New York, NY
Chelsea, MA
Boston, MA
Washington, DC
New York, NY
Houston, TX
Washington, DC
Seattle, WA
Houston, TX
Minnetonka, MN
Los Angeles, CA
Baltimore, MD
Baltimore, MD
Ukiah, CA
Minneapolis, MN
Columbia, MO
Shrewsbury, NJ
Nashville, TN
Washington, DC
Washington, DC
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Washington, DC
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Washington, DC
Washington, DC
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable  
Needle Exchange Emergency Distribution  
New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance  
New York AIDS Coalition  
New York Harm Reduction Educators, Inc.  
North American Syringe Exchange Network  
November Coalition  
NYC AIDS Housing Network  
Office of AIDS Administration  
Ohio Inner City Support for Hepatitis C  
Okaloosa AIDS Support and Informational Services, Inc.  
Open Society Policy Center  
Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation  
Peer Assistance Services, Inc.  
Physicians for Human Rights  
Pierce County AIDS Foundation  
Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas, Inc.  
Positive Health Project, Inc.  
Portland Overdose Prevention Project  
Prairie Psychological Services  
PreventionWorks!  
Professional Nursing Alliance  
Project Inform  
Projecto Sol Filadelphia  
Reality House, Inc.  
Recovery Options  
Safer Alternatives thru Networking & Education  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
SISTAHS Today, Inc.  
St. Ann’s Corner of Harm Reduction  
Status C Unknown  
Students for Sensible Drug Policy  
Tarzana Treatment Center  
The AIDS Institute  
The Center for HIV Law and Policy  
The Drop-in Center  
The Episcopal Church  
Title II Community AIDS National Network  
Trans Equality LA  
Transgender Equality Rights Initiatives  
Treatment Action Group  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations  
Upstate New York Hepatitis C Awareness Project  
Urban Coalition of HIV/AIDS Prevention Services  
Vermont Harm Reduction Coalition  
VOCAL-NY Users Union

Decatur, GA  
Berkeley, CA  
Albuquerque, NM  
New York, NY  
Bronx, NY  
Tacoma, WA  
Colville, WA  
NYC AIDS Housing Network  
Brooklyn, NY  
Oakland, CA  
Cleveland, OH  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
Washington, DC  
San Francisco, CA  
Denver, CO  
Washington, DC  
Tacoma, WA  
Houston, TX  
New York, NY  
Portland, OR  
Oak Park, NY  
Washington, DC  
San Francisco, CA  
Philadelphia, PA  
New York, NY  
Los Angeles, CA  
Sacramento, CA  
San Francisco, CA  
Miami, FL  
Bronx, New York  
New York, NY  
Washington, DC  
Lancaster, CA  
Washington, DC  
New York, NY  
Denver, CO  
Washington, DC  
Los Angeles, CA  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
New York, NY  
Washington, DC  
Delhi, NY  
Washington, DC  
Brattleboro, VT  
Brooklyn, NY
Western Pacific Med/Corp
Women at Risk
Women's HIV Collaborative

Glendale, CA
Culver City, CA
New York, NY