Federal Ban Talking Points

One sentence problem statement:
The federal government’s ban on syringe exchanges increases the number of people who will get HIV.

One paragraph:
“The federal government’s ban on syringe exchange increases the number of people who will get HIV. Local communities, not politicians in Washington D.C., should be allowed to use the best science to fight the spread of HIV. Each year that passes, another 8,000 people are infected with HIV through sharing syringes. Studies by the Centers for Disease Control and the National Academy of Sciences show that syringe exchange programs are effective. Programs have the support of the medical community, including the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association and the American Nurses Association. Syringe exchanges also provide people suffering from drug addiction increased access to drug treatment.”

One sentence ask:
"We need your (your boss’s) help to lift the ban. Please (co-sign this Dear Colleague letter circulated by Rep Castle and Cummings, co-sponsor the Serrano bill, etc)"

Other key talking points:
Injection-related HIV  One third of people with HIV in the United States were infected through injection drug use. Every year, another 8,000 people are newly infected with HIV through sharing contaminated syringes.

These infections are preventable  In communities where access to sterile syringes is supported, transmission of HIV in injecting drug users has declined as a proportion of all cases by mode of transmission. Decreases have also been documented among the sex partners and children of injection drug users.

Syringe exchange programs are highly cost-effective  The lifetime cost of medical care for each new HIV infection is $385,200; the equivalent amount of money spent on syringe exchange programs would prevent at least 30 new HIV infections.

Syringe exchange programs increase access to drug treatment & medical care  In addition to the reduced risks for disease, sterile syringe access programs facilitate greater access to drug treatment. These programs provide a crucial entry point into medical care, detox and rehabilitation, and mental health treatment.

Nearly 200 syringe exchange programs currently operate in 38 states, Puerto Rico, Washington DC, and Indian Lands. Most operate on a shoestring, surviving on dwindling private donations and severe restrictions of public funding.