



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

March 17, 2009

Representative Anna G. Eshoo  
United State House of Representatives  
205 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Eshoo,

The AIDS Institute is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote action for social change through public policy research, advocacy, and education. As our name implies, our primary focus is on HIV/AIDS policy, but we also advocate on behalf of people living with TB, Malaria, and Hepatitis.

The issue of continuous, sustained innovation is of the utmost importance to all people living with illness and disease. Innovation and drug discovery has been crucial to people living with HIV/AIDS. The recent media reports on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the District of Columbia underscores the need for the availability of effective antiretroviral therapy (ART). The success of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in saving the lives of millions of people worldwide through the distribution of ART cannot be disputed. Since 1987, when the first effective ART was developed, the lives of people infected with HIV/AIDS have been extended by years and HIV can now be managed as a chronic disease. All of these life-saving drugs were developed with private investment and it our opinion that this was only possible because pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies were able to recoup their investment in the extensive clinical research and clinical trials needed to make these drugs available to the people that need them. HIV/AIDS is no longer the death sentence it was a mere 14 years ago.

I am writing to lend our support for the Pathways for Biosimilars Act and to encourage you to reintroduce the bill during this session of Congress. The AIDS Institute firmly believes that the only way for people living with HIV/AIDS (and other diseases) to benefit from groundbreaking treatments is to preserve the incentives that made these lifesaving treatments possible in the first place. We also believe that patient safety and sound science is paramount.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of The AIDS Institute and people living with HIV/AIDS, we commend you for your leadership and vision on this issue.

Best regards,

Michael Ruppel  
Interim Executive Director

James E. Sykes, MPH  
Director of Global Programs, Policy and Advocacy