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**Press Release.**

**CUGH calls on Congress to Reauthorize PEPFAR- a lifeline for millions of people.**

Over 25 million lives have been saved to date in over 55 countries; 28.8 million people were receiving antiretroviral treatments (ART) in 2021 alone, significantly curtailing the spread of HIV; among its hallmarks is saving the lives of mothers and children; delivery of care and advanced intervention and HIV control efforts have benefitted the most vulnerable; pandemic prevention has been enhanced; poverty levels reduced; it has served as an exemplar program of US leadership; and it is a platform that is helping to address noncommunicable diseases. Reducing the spread of a potentially lethal virus, access to new treatments, reducing poverty and strengthening US research capacity, has contributed to a safer, healthier, more prosperous America. This is the legacy of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Announced 20 years ago by President George W Bush in his 2003 State of the Union address, it has been consistently reauthorized three times by Congress.

Yet, despite its success, its future is in doubt. PEPFAR is up for its fourth reauthorization but securing sufficient support to fund the program is uncertain. If Congress fails to do so, PEPFAR will continue, but many of its provisions will end. This will leave a diminished program, weakened global HIV control and a reduction in the array of downstream health benefits it creates in low-income nations. This creates a sicker, poorer, less secure world, which is not in the US' interests.

With over 180 academic institutional members and a network of 38,000 global health practitioners worldwide, the Washington, DC based Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) strongly urges Congress to reauthorize PEPFAR. The program has historically received bipartisan support from members who recognized the sustained impact of PEPFAR right here at home and for families worldwide. 'Through PEPFAR, America's scientific, diplomatic and financial resources were mobilized to confront a deadly killer, AIDS, and give hope and life to millions', said Dr. Keith Martin, Executive Director of CUGH. We call upon Congress to continue this path and reauthorize PEPFAR in 2023.

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