



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

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STATEMENT ON THE "CARE" ACT OF 1990

The National Commission on AIDS endorses the principles and objectives of the Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act of 1990. This legislation is responsive to many of the recommendations in the report issued by the National Commission on AIDS in December, 1989, as well as to recommendations of the Presidential Commission Report on the HIV Epidemic of June, 1988.

There must be frank recognition that a health care crisis exists in many of our cities that will require extraordinary measures to overcome. The HIV epidemic of the 1990's will be far worse than what we have seen thus far. Our Nation simply must be prepared to invest adequate resources now or pay dearly later.

The CARE Act of 1990 will provide emergency funds to those areas hardest hit by the epidemic. It will provide critical support for services in hospitals, clinics, other health facilities, and in the home. The CARE Act will prompt the development of more effective systems for the delivery of health and support services, including early intervention. It will develop and fund mechanisms to assure continuity of health insurance coverage for people with HIV disease and will also create community-based consortia capable of delivering a comprehensive continuum of care.

The Commission's recent hearings and site visits in the Los Angeles, New York City, and northern New Jersey areas impressed upon us the serious need for increased coordination between the various levels of government. Managing the HIV epidemic is a responsibility that must be shared by all. This legislation would stimulate further planning and coordination between all levels of government and the private sector.

The health care system in this country is not working well and nowhere is that more evident than for people with HIV infection and AIDS. While AIDS is not the cause of the health care system's disarray, it's epidemic nature has accelerated the urgent need for responsible national action to correct the system's serious shortfalls.

The Commission is extremely pleased that a strong bipartisan commitment has been made to enact this bill and looks forward to the passage and funding of comprehensive AIDS care legislation by the 101st Congress.