



Presidential
Advisory Council
on HIV/AIDS

December 17, 2019

Roger Severino, JD
Director, Office of Civil Rights
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Severino:

We very much appreciated meeting with you on September 24, 2019 and your correspondence to us dated October 8, 2019.

Clearly, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) works hard to ensure that the civil rights of those persons living with HIV are being protected. We very much appreciate OCR's participation on the various HIV/AIDS and hepatitis interagency work groups and the work you all do to educate, train, provide technical assistance, and investigate complaints as it relates to HIV-related discrimination.

We agree that "discrimination has no place in our Nation's health care system." We believe strongly that to achieve the goals of the President's initiative "Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America," HHS must state this loudly and clearly as it implements the initiative and conducts ongoing HIV activities so that people most impacted by HIV, such as gay men and transgender individuals, are comfortable in accessing HIV prevention and treatment programs. Additionally, HHS and other parts of the Administration must avoid actions that repel LGBT+ individuals from seeking proper health care.

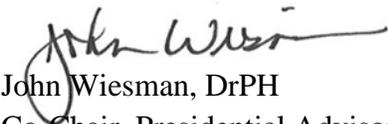
Civil rights protections must extend beyond HIV status to include status or perceived status as gay, bisexual, or transgender. Civil rights protections are critically important for ensuring that LGBT+ persons can access health care and for creating stigma-free environments where all LGBT+ persons can receive quality health care services.

As we work towards an end to the HIV epidemic in the United States, it is vital that LGBT+ persons receive the same kind of protections as persons living with, or perceived to have, HIV/AIDS. We welcome any opportunities to work with the Trump administration and Congress to achieve this.

Sincerely,



Carl Schmid, MBA
Co-Chair, Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS



John Wiesman, DrPH
Co-Chair, Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS



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Co-Chair, Stigma and Disparities Subcommittee, Presidential Advisory Council on HIV AIDS



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