

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2213

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I would like to thank Todd Heywood and everyone here at the National Convening on HIV Discrimination for all of your incredibly important work. I would also like to announce my endorsement of the Consensus Statement on the Criminalization of HIV in the United States from the Positive Justice Project. The Consensus Statement clearly identifies the serious failures of our current law to prevent injustices in the prosecution of HIV-positive people and charts a way forward based on reasonable criteria.

I have always been an outspoken advocate of the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, the expansion of access to HIV/AIDS treatment, and the importance of programs to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. I am also an original cosponsor of Barbara Lee's REPEAL Act, H.R. 3053, which seeks to decriminalize people living with HIV/AIDS. The criminalization of HIV adds a fear of legal bias to the daily struggles faced by the growing number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States.

As a member of the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus, these critical issues continue to be a priority for me. In Congress and in our communities, we must not only urgently work to ensure equal protection under the law for people living with HIV/AIDS. We must also take action to address stigma, fear, and other forms of overt and covert discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS. I look forward to working with you toward these goals in the coming months and years.