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MAY 20, 11 am, Washington DC:

**PEOPLE WITH HIV, ACTIVISTS AND CAREGIVERS MARCH ON
REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC HQs BEARING 1000 ALARM CLOCKS,
BLOCK STREETS AT CONGRESS DEMANDING ELECTION-YEAR ACTION ON
HIV/AIDS, THEY SAY "WAKE UP, TIMES UP" TO CANDIDATES, LEADERS: NEARLY
60,000 IN USA WITHOUT AIDS DRUGS; DELAYS COSTING LIVES IN GLOBAL EPIDEMIC**
Crowd gathers at Folger Park (3rd and D, SE) at 11 am, marches past RNC and DNC, civil disobedience on W. side of Capitol

At least a thousand people living with HIV, family members and providers of AIDS prevention and treatment services are descending in Washington DC for an angry election-year march and civil disobedience action in the largest effort in over a dec

Stressing that the 8% of voters in a tight election identify HIV/AIDS as their number-one health concern, the protesters pledge continued activity, demanding that elected officials and candidates alike commit to comprehensive programs to prevent HIV transmission, to bring treatment and support services to people living with HIV, and to redouble efforts for a cure, in the United States and around the world.

"Last week, the federally-funded Institute of Medicine gave our elected leaders a report that verifies what we're dealing with ev day in our neighborhoods -- at least 59,000 people here in the United States can't get stable access to life-saving AIDS drugs," said Louis Jones of the New York City AIDS Housing Network, a member of the Still We Rise coalition planning events during the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

"Over a thousand of us from across the country are coming to DC to say: 'Wake up! Time's Up! Our lives depend on these medications and support programs, and we're going to be everywhere you are, from here to the national political conventions I the voting booth until we see some real action on this thing. Your own committee tells you that we can fix this problem through strong national programs, and the time to act is now.'"

The coalition demands include:

- o Full funding of domestic and global efforts to provide lifesaving HIV medications to millions
- o Full funding of the domestic and global HIV/AIDS public health infrastructure;
- o Support of real-world, comprehensive and honest HIV prevention efforts;
- o An end to politically-motivated attacks on scientific research on HIV/AIDS; and
- o Full funding for AIDS housing programs.

"Compassion without action equals death," said Charles King, CEO of Housing Works, the nations largest community-based AIDS group. "We have the roadmaps to ending AIDS, from the World Health Organization right down to the frontline-efforts of I AIDS organizations, and we are blocked by funding gaps, moralistic attacks, and bureaucratic delays. In an era of so much do and uncertainty, why are we ignoring proven methods and promising plans to shut down this epidemic?"

"Theres been a death toll through every presidential administration while we continue to block funding for needle exchange or up roadblocks to getting AIDS drugs to poor nations," said Waheedah El-Shabazz of ACT UP Philadelphia. "Believe me, those us who continue to bury our friends and loved ones, here and around the world, are wide awake and ready to do what it takes stop this epidemic. If youre running around saying stuff like condoms dont work, or cutting funds for the programs our lives dep upon, or even just refusing to talk about AIDS out loud and often, youre dreaming if you think you are fighting AIDS."

A full set of information, demands and background documents related to the May 20 demonstration are posted at:
www.champnetwork.org * www.housingworks.org * www.nycahn.org

The AIDS community's recommendations for the presidential candidates are posted at www.aidsvote.org