

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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August 12, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Secretary Rubio:

When the Trump Administration unilaterally dismantled the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) last year, Oversight Democrats warned that people would die. Sadly, we now know that the destruction of USAID and withholding of critical foreign assistance funds from programs like the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) have killed hundreds of thousands of people worldwide.¹ Just as effective new treatments, including twice-yearly injection of lenacapavir, have put ending the HIV and AIDS pandemic within reach, PEPFAR funding cuts and delays by this Administration are undermining progress and endangering lives. A recent independent report by amfAR found that the State Department's mishandling of the PEPFAR program has led to the unnecessary closure of at least 1,700 HIV and AIDS treatment sites in countries that need them most.² While you claim that "the Trump Administration has strengthened PEPFAR," the data tells a very different story.³ Oversight Democrats continue to demand answers about the Trump Administration's dismantling of foreign assistance programs designed to save the lives of those living with HIV and AIDS.

Established under President George W. Bush, the PEPFAR program has had strong bipartisan support since its inception in 2003. Through medical assistance and preventive care, the program has saved the lives of 26 million people across more than 50 countries who would have died from AIDS.⁴ Prior to the second Trump Administration, "the U.S. provided the

¹ Democratic Staff, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *"People are Already Dying and More Will Die": What the Trump Administration's Lie About the U.S. Agency for International Development has Cost America and The World* (June 4, 2026) (online at https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/usaaid_report.pdf).

² *1,700 H.I.V. Treatment Sites Closed After Trump Aid Cuts, a Study Finds*, New York Times (July 21, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/07/21/health/hiv-trump-cuts-pepfar.html).

³ *Id.*

⁴ amfAR, *Measuring the Global Impact of PEPFAR Disruptions: Findings from the PEPFAR Pulse Study* (July 21, 2026) (online at www.amfar.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/PEPFAR-Pulse-Study_2448.pdf); KFF, *The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)* (May 22, 2026) (online at www.kff.org/global-health-policy/the-u-s-presidents-emergency-plan-for-aids-relief-pepfar/).

majority of global funds for HIV prevention in low and middle-income countries and [was] credited with helping to reverse the global spread of HIV [and] AIDS.”⁵

The Trump Administration has taken unprecedented steps to disassemble the PEPFAR program and withhold or delay crucial, lifesaving funds.⁶ On January 20, 2025, the Trump Administration announced a 90-day freeze on all foreign assistance funds, including PEPFAR, and took immediate steps to dismantle HIV and AIDS programs funded through USAID. These reckless actions resulted in thousands of people not receiving antiretroviral therapy to treat HIV, a delay in the distribution of condoms and prophylactic medications that prevent HIV infection, and AIDS-related deaths, including children.⁷

By August 2025, more than half of PEPFAR appropriated funds for the fiscal year had not been disbursed—a break from the precedent of releasing full funding and a clear subversion of congressional intent.⁸ The State Department obligated \$2.5 billion less to PEPFAR in 2026 than it received in 2024 and last year the Trump Administration slashed 30% of PEPFAR’s \$4.7 billion in funding.⁹ The State Department reports spending just 70% of available funds this year.¹⁰

Until its unlawful demolition, USAID was the primary implementing partner of PEPFAR programs. In the months following USAID’s dismantling, the State Department promised that PEPFAR programs could continue through a series of humanitarian waivers.¹¹ In reality,

⁵ Letter from Nidhi Bouri, Former USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Global Health, to Ranking Member Gerald E. Connolly, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Ranking Member Suhas Subramanyam, Subcommittee on Military and Foreign Affairs, and Ranking Member Melanie Stansbury, Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency (Mar. 27, 2025) (on file with the Committee).

⁶ Jirair Ratevosian, & Chris Beyrer, *Fundamental PEPFAR Reform Risks a Period of Structural Vulnerability in the HIV Response*, *The Lancet* (Mar. 14, 2026) (online at [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(26\)00369-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(26)00369-7)).

⁷ *Trump Pauses Disbursements to Program Supplying H.I.V. Treatment Worldwide*, *New York Times* (Jan. 24, 2025) (online at www.nytimes.com/2025/01/24/us/politics/trump-hiv-aids-pepfar.html); Democratic Staff, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *“People are Already Dying and More Will Die”: What the Trump Administration’s Lie About the U.S. Agency for International Development has Cost America and The World* (June 4, 2026) (online at https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/usaidth_report.pdf); *1,700 H.I.V. Treatment Sites Closed After Trump Aid Cuts, a Study Finds*, *New York Times* (July 21, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/07/21/health/hiv-trump-cuts-pepfar.html).

⁸ *A Global HIV/AIDS Program That Saved Millions of Lives Faces Cuts Under The Trump Administration*, *NBC News* (July 25, 2025) (online at www.nbcnews.com/politics/trump-administration/global-hiv-aids-program-saved-millions-lives-faces-cuts-trump-administr-rcna221025); *Trump Budget Office Is Withholding H.I.V. Funds That Congress Appropriated*, *New York Times* (Aug. 21, 2025) (online at www.nytimes.com/2025/08/21/health/hiv-aids-pepfar-funding-trump.html).

⁹ *With a Series of Big Donations, State Department Restores Some Global Health Aid*, *New York Times* (Aug. 2, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/08/02/health/trump-health-aid-state-department.html); *Amid U.S. Funding Cuts, The International AIDS Conference Faces an Uncertain Future*, *NPR* (July 28, 2026) (online at www.npr.org/2026/07/28/nx-s1-5909368/international-aids-conference-hiv).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Rubio Exempting “Life-saving Humanitarian Assistance” From Foreign Aid Restrictions*, *The Hill* (Jan.

implementing partners report widespread confusion with the waiver process and little rationale for why critical funds have been withheld.¹²

Under your leadership, the State Department's reporting on the lasting impacts of the dismantling of USAID conflicts with outside reporting and independent studies. In April 2026, the State Department maintained that the number of people receiving treatment through PEPFAR remained steady despite the Trump Administration's foreign aid cuts.¹³ Yet an independent survey of 166 organizations funded by PEPFAR in 46 countries found that these organizations were forced to close 1,700 clinics, drop-in centers and other service delivery sites, and saw the loss of more than 16,000 full-time staff members. Three quarters of the organizations also reported that they stopped providing services to the highest-risk populations. Separate research found that the number of people treated with PEPFAR support has declined by 10%,¹⁴ casting serious doubt on the State Department's assertions that PEPFAR continues to operate as directed by Congress. This survey suggests that 77,000 fewer children are receiving HIV treatment now, representing a 14% decline.¹⁵

Internal State Department documents from July 2025 may shed light on the disconnect between your department's statements and independent reporting. These documents indicated that under your leadership, the State Department drafted plans to transition PEPFAR from a humanitarian assistance program, to a "trade over aid" program in which countries would have to prove useful to the United States to receive foreign assistance.¹⁶ Whether or not this is official

29, 2025) (online at <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5113926-trump-executive-order-review/>).

¹² See e.g. Letter from Nidhi Bouri, Former USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Global Health, to Ranking Member Gerald. E. Connolly, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Ranking Member Suhas Subramanyam, Subcommittee on Military and Foreign Affairs, and Ranking Member Melanie Stansbury, Subcommittee on Delivering on Government Efficiency (Mar. 27, 2025) (on file with the Committee).

¹³ ABC News, *First on ABC: Memo to Rubio Details Data on HIV/AIDS Treatment Program Under Trump Administration* (Apr. 17, 2026) (online at <https://abcnews.com/Politics/abc-memo-rubio-details-data-hiv-aids-treatment-program/story?id=132143460>); U.S. Department of State, *Press Release: Spotlight FY25 Quarter Four Public Data Release: PEPFAR Continues Support for Over 20 Million Living with HIV and More Than Doubles Number of Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women on HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis* (Apr. 17, 2026) (online at www.state.gov/releases/bureau-of-global-health-security-and-diplomacy/2026/04/spotlight-fy25-quarter-four-public-data-release-pepfar-continues-support-for-over-20-million-living-with-hiv-and-more-than-doubles-number-of-pregnant-and-breastfeed).

¹⁴ Nature Health, *Shifts in PEPFAR-Supported HIV Treatment in 26 Countries from 2024 to 2025* (June 24, 2026) (online at www.nature.com/articles/s44360-026-00159-1); amfAR, *Measuring the Global Impact of PEPFAR Disruptions: Findings from the PEPFAR Pulse Study* (July 21, 2026) (online at www.amfar.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/PEPFAR-Pulse-Study_2448.pdf); *1,700 H.I.V. Treatment Sites Closed After Trump Aid Cuts, a Study Finds*, New York Times (July 21, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/07/21/health/hiv-trump-cuts-pepfar.html).

¹⁵ *1,700 H.I.V. Treatment Sites Closed After Trump Aid Cuts, a Study Finds*, New York Times (July 21, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/07/21/health/hiv-trump-cuts-pepfar.html).

¹⁶ *U.S. Quietly Drafts Plan to End Program That Saved Millions From AIDS*, New York Times (July 23, 2025) (online at www.nytimes.com/2025/07/23/health/pepfar-shutdown.html).

State Department policy, in many instances, this doctrine describes the Trump Administration's posture.

In March 2026, a memo prepared for you by your department's Africa Bureau stated that the U.S. should consider withholding HIV medications from Zambia until securing a critical minerals deal. According to the *New York Times*, the memo stipulated, "We will only secure our priorities by demonstrating willingness to publicly take support away from Zambia on a massive scale."¹⁷ Not only does this kind of quid pro quo strike at the heart of PEPFAR's nonpartisan humanitarian mission, but it is also unconscionably cruel to the 1.3 million Zambians living with HIV and reliant on PEPFAR-funded medications.¹⁸ In 2025, Zambia has seen an uptick in AIDS deaths after years of progress.¹⁹

Further, the Administration has stopped negotiations with Ghana and Zimbabwe over the future of PEPFAR support. A recent modeling study found that a complete withdrawal from Zimbabwe could result in approximately 75,000 additional HIV infections in one year.²⁰

In South Africa, which has the highest rate of HIV infection globally, the Administration announced without warning it would phase out all PEPFAR support by early 2027, based on unfounded claims of a state sanctioned "genocide" of South Africa's white population, rather than any concrete public health goal.²¹

In June 2026, in another blow to PEPFAR, the State Department abruptly announced plans to cut the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) out of a longstanding joint-agency partnership to implement PEPFAR programs preventing HIV and related emerging diseases. Proposed plans to shut CDC out of HIV prevention abroad could needlessly harm the 12 million people receiving HIV treatment through CDC programs. Typically, the State Department would allocate \$2 billion annually to CDC to help other countries combat HIV. The State Department has not been transparent with Congress or the American people about where that \$2 billion will go if CDC is shut out of PEPFAR implementation.²²

¹⁷ *U.S. Considers Withholding H.I.V. Aid Unless Zambia Expands Minerals Access*, New York Times (Mar. 16, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/03/16/health/zambia-hiv-aid-minerals-trump.html).

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ Democratic Staff, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, "People are Already Dying and More Will Die": What the Trump Administration's Lie About the U.S. Agency for International Development has Cost America and The World (June 4, 2026) (online at https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/usaid_report.pdf).

²⁰ Khai Hoan Tram, Jennifer Sherwood, et. al., *Projected Impact of U.S. PEPFAR Withdrawal on Zimbabwe and Implications for the Global HIV Response*, JAIDS Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes (online at <https://doi.org/10.1097/QAI.0000000000003925>).

²¹ See e.g. *Trump Administration to End PEPFAR Funding for South Africa*, SEMAFOR (June 18, 2026) (online at www.semafor.com/article/06/18/2026/trump-administration-to-end-pepfar-funding-for-south-africa).

²² *New Plan Scales Back C.D.C. 's Work on Diseases Abroad*, New York Times (June 17, 2026) (online at www.nytimes.com/2026/06/17/health/pepfar-cdc-cuts.html).

The State Department's attacks on PEPFAR are part of a larger pattern of the Trump Administration's cruelty and disregard toward those living with HIV. The Trump Administration has disrupted at least 367 grants impacting nearly \$2.5 billion in funding for HIV and AIDS research, including canceling or delaying billions of dollars in CDC grants for HIV prevention and terminating hundreds of millions of dollars of research to find a vaccine to prevent new HIV infections.²³

The Trump Administration has remained opaque about the status of funds appropriated for the PEPFAR program and whether they have been disbursed. Oversight Democrats have sent the State Department multiple requests for information on the dissolution of USAID and the resulting impact on HIV- and AIDS-related treatment abroad. To date, we have received *no* responses from the State Department. To assist in our investigation, I request the following information by August 26, 2026:

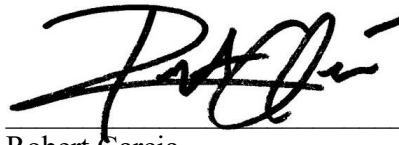
1. A detailed accounting of all PEPFAR funds that have been dispersed between January 20, 2025, and present, including information detailing recipients and the total funds they have received;
2. A detailed accounting of all allocated PEPFAR funds that have been appropriated but not released to the program between January 20, 2025, and present, with information explaining why these funds have been withheld;
3. All documents, information, and communications between January 20, 2025, and present regarding PEPFAR and HIV and AIDS programs administered by the Department of State and USAID;
4. All documents, information, and communications between January 20, 2025, and present regarding the State Department's decision to diminish and, in some settings, exclude CDC from PEPFAR implementation; and
5. All documents and communications between January 20, 2025, and present regarding withholding HIV-related funding to any specific country, including but not limited to Zambia, Ghana, South Africa and Zimbabwe,

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Committee Democratic staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

²³ Democratic Staff, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Abandoning Americans to Disease: The Trump Administration's Reckless Crusade is Harming America's Health* (June 23, 2026) (online at <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/imo/media/doc/2026-06-23cogrdempublichealthreport.pdf>).

The Honorable Marco Rubio
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Garcia", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Garcia
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman