

# HIV Prevention Act of 2007

## S. 1553

June 2007

### Lead Sponsors:

Senator Dianne Feinstein- Democrat, California  
Senator Olympia Snowe- Republican, Maine

### Legislative Goals and Effects:

Remove the funding restriction in the United States Leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-25) requiring that 1/3 of all U.S. global HIV prevention funding go toward abstinence-until-marriage programs.

### Congressionally Mandated Reports and the Abstinence Earmark

The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed PEPFAR prevention programs between February 2005 and released its findings in April 2006. PEPFAR's authorizing legislation also directed the National Institute of Medicine (IOM) to perform a midterm evaluation of PEPFAR implementation. The IOM began its evaluation in February 2005 and released its report in March of 2007. Findings of these studies include:

- The abstinence-until-marriage earmark undermines efforts to provide evidence-based, comprehensive prevention services as outlined by the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator's (OGAC) guidance around ABC (GAO, IOM).
- The earmark has limited the ability of Country Teams to develop and implement comprehensive prevention programs that are well integrated with each other and with counseling and testing, care, and treatment programs (IOM).
- The abstinence-until-marriage earmark hampers implementing prevention programs that are harmonized with country plans and priorities and appropriate to each country's unique epidemiological context (GAO, IOM).
- Some countries receive an exemption from the earmark, but non-exempted countries suffer because they must, in turn, spend more on abstinence-until-marriage (GAO).
- OGAC requires abstinence-until-marriage programs without companion efforts to promote safer sex and spends more on these programs than required by law (GAO).
- Evidence for the position that abstinence can stand alone or that 33 percent is the appropriate allocation for such activities even within integrated programs is lacking (IOM).

### Abstinence–Until–Marriage Programs Fail Women and Youth

Abstinence-until-marriage/abstinence-only-until marriage programs fail to address real needs:

- In 2006, there were 4.3 million new HIV infections.
- 80% of HIV infections among women worldwide result from sex with their husbands or primary partners.
- 50% of new HIV infections are in youth aged 15-24; the majority of youth are already sexually active.
- In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, infection rates among women age 15-24 are four to seven times higher than those of their male peers.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, the region at which the vast majority of PEPFAR funding is focused, the vast majority of youth have had sex before the age of 20.
- Prevention programs need to be comprehensive for individuals. Segregating "abstain" or "be faithful" messages from messages about condoms and negotiating safer sex leaves people vulnerable.

### To Co-Sponsor the Bill or Learn More:

Offices interested in co-sponsoring the bill or learning more should contact Rich Harper (Richard\_Harper@Feinstein.senate.gov) in Senator Feinstein's office at 202-224-3841.

[www.genderhealth.org](http://www.genderhealth.org)  
[www.pepfarwatch.org](http://www.pepfarwatch.org)  
[www.preventionnow.net](http://www.preventionnow.net)



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