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**ON WORLD AIDS DAY, MAYOR DE BLASIO, SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO & CITY COUNCIL
ANNOUNCE NYC COMMITMENT TO END THE EPIDEMIC**

New plan aims to dramatically reduce new HIV infections by 2020 through \$23 million in new prevention & health care, as well as commitment to HASA For All

NEW YORK—Today, on World AIDS Day, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and the New York City Council announced a comprehensive commitment to end the AIDS epidemic in New York City through a number of new prevention and support programs, including \$23 million in new prevention and health care programs – enabling nearly 200,000 people a year to receive services – as well as expanded housing, nutrition, and transportation support for up to 7,300 additional clients.

“It’s time to end the AIDS epidemic once and for all,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “As we mark World AIDS Day, I’m proud to partner with the Council to announce an unprecedented \$23 million more a year for prevention and health care, enabling nearly 200,000 people to receive services each year. And we’re committing to expanding vital HASA housing, nutrition, and transportation support to all who need it – up to 7,300 more people a year – because no New Yorker living with HIV or AIDS should have to choose between medicine and rent.”

“New York City is fully committed to ensuring the health and security of all our residents,” said **Speaker Mark-Viverito**. “Our comprehensive plan will drastically reduce new HIV infections and will provide expanded supportive services for all New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS. I thank Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, Council Member Johnson and my Council colleagues for their partnership as we work together to eradicate HIV/AIDS from our City.”

With 80 percent of the State’s HIV/AIDS cases in New York City, the plan draws on proven experience and science -- setting an ambitious but achievable goal of bringing new HIV infections down in New York City to achieve the statewide goal of no more than 750 per year by 2020. In 2014, 2,718 New York City residents were newly diagnosed with HIV, a historical low representing a decrease of more than 35 percent from the 4,186 new HIV diagnoses in 2004.

The City’s plan draws upon the recommendations of New York State’s Ending the Epidemic Task Force report adopted earlier this year, and follows an initial \$6.6 million commitment for preventative medicine, training, and viral suppression funded by the Council in the FY2016 budget. The City – through the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Human Resources Administration, and NYC Health + Hospitals – served on the State’s Task Force.

The NYC Plan to End the Epidemic combines enhanced medical and social services with biomedical innovation into a comprehensive strategy to reduce new infections. The City is committing to enhancing HIV biomedical prevention and health care, as well as to working with the State and other partners to expand housing, nutrition, and transportation assistance (known as HASA For All), to decrease HIV transmission while supporting the health and well-being of those with HIV or AIDS.

“This major investment by Mayor de Blasio and the Council in the fight against HIV/AIDS will make a tremendous impact on the lives of thousands of New Yorkers,” said **Council Member Corey Johnson, Chair of the Committee on Health**. “With this announcement, New York City is truly stepping up to the plate in providing resources to end the scourge of HIV/AIDS in New York City. This \$23 million in new money aligns with Governor Cuomo's blueprint and is rooted in science. We know how to prevent new infections and support those currently living with HIV/AIDS. I also look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Governor Cuomo and advocates in finally ensuring critical rental, nutritional and transportation assistance is available for low-income HIV+ New Yorkers who are currently left behind. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Commissioner Banks and Commissioner Bassett for all of their hard work in making today possible. The end of the epidemic is truly in sight.”

“The Council and Administration’s joint investment will greatly reduce new HIV infections and improve the quality of life for those New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS,” said **Council Finance Chair Julissa Ferreras-Copeland**. “Our new health care programs build on the Council’s ongoing commitment to equalizing resources, and I thank Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio and my colleagues in government as we work together to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.”

“The AIDS epidemic has taken the lives of far too many people in New York City and across the globe. Although we have made dramatic improvements in recent decades, there is much more that needs to be done to eradicate this disease. The steps taken today by this council in partnership with the Mayor is an ambitious plan that I believe will reduce the number of infections through education, screening, and enhanced medical services,” said **Council Member Rafael L. Espinal**.

Prevention and Health Care

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will launch a \$23 million per year prevention and health care plan that, when fully implemented, will enable nearly 200,000 people per year to receive services through the following initiatives:

- **Promote early initiation of anti-retroviral therapy (ART) in newly diagnosed individuals and maintenance of viral suppression in people with established disease.** DOHMH’s sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics will rapidly initiate ART in people newly diagnosed with HIV, and the Department, working with community organizations, will enhance support for patients to take ART consistently and correctly. Patients that immediately start and continue on ART can live with a normal life expectancy and remain 90 percent less likely to transmit infection than people not taking ART.
- **Provide medications that prevent HIV infection to people at the highest risk for infection,** including both pre-exposure prophylaxis (known as PrEP -- medication taken once daily every day to prevent HIV in people at risk of HIV) and post-exposure prophylaxis (known as PEP – a one month course of ART in people who have recently been exposed to the HIV virus to prevent infection). The plan involves Health Department STD clinics initiating PrEP and PEP treatments in patients at risk for HIV infection, and supporting a network of community partners to continue these preventive services.
- **Bring people at risk of infection into the healthcare system and offer them services to prevent HIV.** The City will enhance funding for Health Department STD clinics to expand hours and medicine delivery and increase the number of patients they will serve, conduct community outreach and social mobilization to marginalized populations who could benefit from these interventions, and work across the entire health care delivery system to create a more welcoming environment for LGBTQ communities.

- **Collect better data to target HIV prevention activities more effectively.** DOHMH will adopt a new technology to track how HIV infection is transmitted in the five boroughs, allowing the City to identify and offer services to vulnerable individuals and groups with more speed and specificity than in the past.

City Commitment to HASA For All

The administration and the Council are committed to working with the State and other partners to expand vital HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) housing, nutrition, and transportation assistance to all eligible New Yorkers with HIV or AIDS – up to 7,300 additional clients by the year 2020.

HASA for All is expected to cost \$99 million per year at full ramp up. The City expects to recognize savings to lower that cost, including from reductions in shelter costs from housing over 800 more individuals and families.

Currently, HASA benefits are only available to people with AIDS and symptomatic HIV; yet people with HIV who have stable housing are more likely to pursue and maintain their treatment. In fact, a federal study by the Centers for Disease Control and Department of Housing and Urban Development found that providing rental assistance to homeless or unstably housed individuals with HIV improved overall physical and mental health. By expanding public assistance for rent, basic expenses, nutrition, and transportation to all financially-eligible people with HIV the City could decrease the instances of AIDS.

“While many strides have been made in the treatment of HIV and AIDS worldwide, we still need to work together to reduce the number of those infected to zero,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. “I look forward to continuing to work with Mayor de Blasio and my colleagues in New York City government to provide the necessary prevention and treatment to combat this crisis as well as provide the wrap-around support resources in the areas of mental health, housing, transportation and job training.”

“As we observe World AIDS Day, I applaud the Mayor and City Council’s efforts to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York City by taking bold steps to create new prevention and support programs,” said **Congressman Charles B. Rangel**. “These efforts will provide much-needed assistance for the thousands living with HIV/AIDS in our city and help eradicate the virus. Together, we can work towards building a global community free from HIV/AIDS.”

“Today is a day to remember the lives lost to this disease, to reflect on the progress made, and to renew our commitment to eliminating AIDS once and for all,” said **Congressman Joe Crowley, Vice Chair of the Democratic Caucus**. “The NYC Plan to End the Epidemic will go a long way in helping to prevent AIDS, develop new treatment options, and support those living with AIDS, and their families. I thank the City for taking these critical steps in an effort to eliminate AIDS for good.”

Congressman Jerry Nadler said, “I applaud New York City’s significant new investment towards ending the epidemic of HIV/AIDS, led by Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito and Health Committee Chair Council Member Johnson. This new funding will expand access to vital healthcare services, as well as medications like ART, PEP and PReP, which will save lives and help prevent new infections.”

“On World AIDS Day, it’s important to take note of the significant strides we’ve made in the fight against HIV/AIDS both at home and abroad, while still recognizing we have a long way to go to end this terrible epidemic. As a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, I have fought tirelessly for initiatives like the Ryan White Program, which brings life-saving care to more than 500,000 disadvantaged Americans living with HIV/AIDS. Successful programs like this are vital to achieving an AIDS-free world, which is why the City’s \$23 million commitment to new AIDS prevention and health care measures is so important. I applaud Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, and the City Council for taking this important step, and working toward achieving our goal of one day having a truly AIDS-free generation,” said **Congressman Eliot Engel**.

State Senator Brad Hoylman said, “Nothing is more important than ensuring the health and well-being of New Yorkers, especially the most vulnerable. The significant commitments announced today by both the Governor and the Mayor to help end the AIDS epidemic in New York will be critical to achieving that goal. At the city level, I’m profoundly grateful to Mayor de Blasio, City Council Speaker Mark-Viverito, Council Health Committee Chair Corey Johnson and the entire City Council for their efforts at addressing one of the greatest scourges of our time, which is responsible for the untimely deaths of more than 100,000 New Yorkers.”

“AIDS is an epidemic that has tragically impacted all of us. Fortunately today, through concerted efforts by multiple stakeholders, HIV is no longer a death sentence. What’s more, we know how to prevent it, and rates of infection have been falling in New York City. I commend the City Council and Mayor de Blasio for making this substantial monetary commitment for a holistic program to help us get to zero new infections and support those with the virus in leading healthy and vital lives,” said **Assembly Member Daniel O’Donnell**.

“Today, upon World AIDS Day, we remember the untimely deaths of all who have died from this still deadly disease, and those who continue to live with it and struggle to remain healthy. It is great news for all New Yorkers that Mayor Bill de Blasio, and Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito have spearheaded a movement to allocate \$23 million to vital programs to help prevent new Infections, which thankfully are now down over 35%, and end the epidemic in our great city,” said **Assembly Member Nick Perry**.

“Today, Mayor de Blasio made a historic commitment to advancing an end to the AIDS epidemic here in New York City. The investment in HIV prevention and viral suppression is both crucial and unmatched by any prior mayor,” said **Charles King, President and CEO of Housing Works**. “And the offer to expand Enhanced housing assistance and other entitlements to all income-eligible residents living with HIV is something we have been seeking for some 26 years. We are thrilled that Mayor de Blasio has recognized that housing stability is a key ingredient to ending this epidemic in our City.”

“As the world’s first AIDS service organization, GMHC has seen the overwhelming success of early detection and treatment of HIV,” said **GMHC CEO Kelsey Louie**. “Every year, we test over 3,000 people for HIV at our testing center and of those who test positive, 90 percent are virally suppressed. Mayor de Blasio’s and Speaker Mark-Viverito’s commitment to increasing money for prevention and health care programs will help scale up successful programs like ours. To have all levels of government taking part in supporting Governor Cuomo’s plan to end AIDS by 2020, New York elected officials are a shining example of how government leadership is essential to finally ending the epidemic.”

“Today, Mayor de Blasio brought us much closer to the realization of the end of the AIDS epidemic in NYS. Expanding enhanced rental assistance to all HIV+ New Yorkers is not only good policy that will dramatically reduce HIV infections, it is also deeply compassionate and humane ensuring that thousands of New Yorkers will be able to move out of homelessness,” said **Jennifer Flynn, director of VOCAL New York**.

“The Mayor has demonstrated extraordinary leadership in the effort to end AIDS in New York State” said **Jacquelyn Kilmer, Chief Executive Officer of Harlem United**. “We know New York City holds the burden of the state’s epidemic so a local investment is critical to meet the need of people living with, and impacted by, HIV! At Harlem United we know firsthand the need for expanded opportunities for housing for people living with HIV and AIDS and the need to ensure access to prevention interventions, such as PrEP. These are interventions we know work. We’re proud to serve a city whose progressive leadership is making an end to AIDS a priority, and we look forward to making this vision a reality.”

“Today – right now – we have the tools to put a stop to HIV and AIDS,” said **GLAAD CEO & President Sarah Kate Ellis**. “By devoting substantial new resources to increasing education and access to prevention, New York City is taking a lead in ending HIV and AIDS once and for all.”

“The Mayor, the Speaker and the New York City Council are taking substantial strides on this World AIDS Day to help end the epidemic by 2020,” said **Glennnda Testone, Executive Director of The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center**. “Their commitment to dedicating \$23 million to supporting people who

live with HIV and AIDS while we fight to reduce infections is perfectly in line with the work The Center does every day, and we salute them."

"BOOM!Health commends Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark Viverito and the NYC Council for increasing their commitment to end the AIDS Epidemic in NYC and is proud to be a partner in eradicating this disease once and for all," stated **Jose M Davila, President & CEO of BOOM!Health.**

"We are pleased that Mayor de Blasio along with Speaker Mark-Viverito and the NYC Council recognize the importance of expanding the definition of prevention and developing a multifaceted approach to care," said **Sean Coleman, Executive Director Destination Tomorrow.** "At Destination Tomorrow we see barriers to testing every day, such as inadequate housing, food insecurity and lack of transportation. It is essential that these barriers are addressed if we are to accomplish our goal to end the epidemic by 2020, this progressive proposal and funding does just that."

"Make the Road New York (MRNY) applauds Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Viverito's commitment to end the AIDS epidemic in New York City. There is a huge need among immigrant communities for more prevention and health access programs including community based HIV testing," said **Becca Telzak, Director of Health Programs, Make the Road New York.** "MRNY thanks the Mayor and Speaker for their continued commitment and dedication to these programs as we work together to ends the AIDS epidemic in the city."

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