

Newt Gingrich's PEPFAR Op-ed

By Newt Gingrich

I recently signed a letter pledging my full support of Rep. Chris Smith's efforts to ensure that U.S. global health policy genuinely cares for — and protects — the most vulnerable from AIDS.

It is incredibly disappointing but not surprising that the Biden administration has hijacked one of President George W. Bush's greatest accomplishments — the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, known as PEPFAR — to promote abortion on demand in the developing world.

President Biden's insincere and demonstrably false claim that PEPFAR isn't pushing abortion on demand in Africa and elsewhere collapses under any serious scrutiny of its partners.

Under President Donald Trump, PEPFAR was robustly funded at \$6 billion per year — \$30 billion over five years — and saved millions of lives by pushing prevention strategies, including the mitigation of HIV-positive mother-to-child transmission and by providing medicines to people with HIV.

To ensure that the global abortion industry did not siphon billions of taxpayer funds, Mr. Trump issued an executive order to reinstate and expand President Ronald Reagan's Mexico City policy (now called Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance).

When Mr. Trump was in office, Americans could rest assured that tax dollars would not subsidize foreign nongovernmental pro-abortion organizations that perform abortions

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or lobby to weaken or destroy life-affirming laws in many African countries.

Upon taking office, however, Mr. Biden repealed this policy, opening the floodgates to combining HIV/AIDS work with the promotion and performance of abortion.

This fact couldn't be clearer. In addition to revoking Mr. Trump's executive order, last September, Mr. Biden announced Reimagining PEPFAR's Strategic Direction — a radically new global strategy that integrates abortion promotion as a component of "sexual and reproductive health and rights" with HIV/AIDS work.

It is no coincidence that numerous U.N. agencies, including the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, as well as groups such as the

International Planned Parenthood Federation, are aggressively promoting the integration of abortion with HIV/AIDS initiatives.

In its 2023 Country and Regional Plan Guidance, the Biden administration unambiguously declared that PEPFAR country programs should work with organizations that they fund seeking to change laws regarding sexual and reproductive rights of women — explicitly directing PEPFAR recipients to support new pro-abortion laws and policies.

I applaud the work of Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, chairman of the House Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, for leading the Appropriations Committee passage of his legislation to reauthorize PEPFAR for one year combined with Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance.

In like manner, any multi-year reauthorization of PEPFAR must include that pro-life policy as well.

I know pro-life members of Congress want to see PEPFAR succeed. I stand with them on that front.

I also support this exceedingly important effort to protect unborn children and their mothers, increase transparency and accountability of our foreign aid dollars, and ensure that the U.S. provides true life-affirming assistance to those in need.

Every American who cares about the unborn should tell their representatives and senators to support this important effort.