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United States People Living with HIV Caucus, Strong for World AIDS Day and Beyond.

December 1, 2013 -- The United States People Living with HIV (PLHIV) Caucus, a group of organizations, networks, client groups, and individuals with HIV advocating for HIV-positive people in the U.S., has crafted its governance document, reflecting an ongoing engagement in HIV advocacy, available on www.hivcaucus.org.

“Since the early days of this epidemic, people living with HIV have demanded meaningful participation in advocacy and public health initiatives that affect us, yet more and more we see our voices dismissed or tokenized to advance another agenda. The US PLHIV Caucus has taken steps to define meaningful participation and move towards it,” said Vanessa Johnson, Co-Secretary of the Caucus and longtime advocate for women living with HIV.

The USPLHIV Caucus has stood for the representation and engagement with persons living with HIV since it first formed in 2010. The new governance document reflects a structure that will most effectively reflect the diverse populations of people living with HIV in the United States. There are opportunities for community networks, organizations, client groups, and HIV-positive activists to take part in policy, advocacy and communications. The governance document was one product of a recent planning retreat supported by the Ford Foundation and formalizes the operating rules of the US PLHIV Caucus Steering Committee and Coordinating Council, as well as guide our activities in 2014 and beyond.

Cecilia Chung, Chair of the Caucus, declared, “This caucus is the most representative voice of people living with HIV in the US today. We have representation across the country, including urban and rural areas and across race and gender lines. We work towards the most inclusive voice possible, we are committed to transparency and accountability in all our endeavors.”

The US PLHIV Caucus celebrates World AIDS Day 2013 by acknowledging the importance of the passing of the HIV Organ Policy Equity (HOPE) Act and the Senate introduction of the Repeal Existing Policies that Encourage and Allow Legal (REPEAL) HIV Discrimination Act by Rep Barbara Lee. “The HOPE Act and the REPEAL Act reflect responsible legislation, one that accounts for advances in HIV science and knowledge,” said Barb Cardell, a Colorado-based HIV activist and Vice Chair of the Caucus, “We will continue to advance a collective voice of people living with HIV that supports these endeavors which address HIV stigma and discrimination.”

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The United States People Living with HIV Caucus is a group of organizations, networks, client groups, and individuals with HIV advocating for HIV-positive people in the U.S. The Caucus is dedicated to being a platform for a united voice for people living with HIV in the US. For more information, see the website: www.hivcaucus.org.