



ELTON JOHN AIDS FOUNDATION

US Congressional Reception Honoring Global AIDS Champions A Message from Sir Elton John

I so wish I was able to be in Washington tonight to join FRIENDS OF THE GLOBAL FIGHT in honoring our Congressional Champions in the global fight against AIDS.

I have proudly worked for decades with Speaker Pelosi, Chairwoman Lee, and Chairman Leahy -- who thinks he is retiring, as do I, but as he knows well, no one ever really leaves this fight.

I am boundlessly grateful to each of you for your unwavering commitment to creating an AIDS-free world and to leaving no one behind. We would not be here now without your extraordinary commitment.

I too am thankful for our partnership with, and the tireless efforts of, Senator Graham and Congresswoman Granger, who remind us – as do the good words from former President Bush - that this fight has been, and must continue to be, wholeheartedly bipartisan.

This fight is about ending AIDS, and TOGETHER we can and we must. COVID-19 has set us back, but thanks to our champions' investments in the Global Fund and PEPFAR, it has also demonstrated the resilience and agility of African health systems and health care workers to respond as a new infectious disease threat emerged and exploded.

It was community health workers, nurses, lab techs, NGOs and people living with HIV that helped to maintain and protect essential HIV treatment and prevention services and to leverage lessons learned for the fight against COVID. While our goal is now solidly within reach, we are not done yet. New investments are desperately needed to get us back on track and moving forward.

With \$18 billion from all its donors for the 7th replenishment, the Global Fund can support partner countries in saving 20 million more lives from AIDS, TB and Malaria as well as preventing nearly a half-billion new infections. If we fail, we will pay dearly in terms of both dollars and lives.

America has always led the way and I am grateful that you are doing so yet again. Thanks to President Biden for hosting Global Fund replenishment this Fall and for his intention to pledge \$6 billion for the 7th replenishment. Thank you also to the House of Representatives for proposing a \$2 billion US investment in the Global Fund for 2023. In particular, thank you to one of tonight's honorees, Representative Barbara Lee, for including \$2 billion for the Global Fund in her bill. We trust that our Champions will secure this bold contribution in the Senate as they always have – and that US leadership will leverage a commensurate 30% increase from G7 and other key donors. Please know that I have been burning up the phone lines in London, Paris, Ottawa and elsewhere urging others to follow America's lead.

Again, to tonight's honorees – no words can adequately express my gratitude to you for transforming discrimination and death into help and hope for millions of individuals, families and communities around the world. We are forever in your debt.



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TOGETHER, WE WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

Thank you and good night.

Sir Elton John
Founder, Elton John AIDS Foundation