

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS BY CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR OF CHICAGO

AFC invited mayoral candidates Richard M. Daley, Paul L. Jakes, Jr., Joseph McAfee, and Patricia McAllister to submit written statements on the HIV/AIDS issues detailed in the Candidate Questionnaire.

### **Richard M. Daley**

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"Do you support an increase of \$1 million or more in City corporate funding for community-based HIV prevention services as a strategy to address the escalating HIV/AIDS crisis in our city and to prevent new HIV infections?"

Yes, if we can. With the slowdown in the nation's economy, revenues are plunging for cities and states across the country. And our city has not been immune. But, because Chicago was one of the few local or state governments in the nation to anticipate the slowdown, we were able to avoid the drastic cuts in our 2003 budget with which so many cities and states are now contending. Understanding the importance of the escalating and changing HIV/AIDS crisis, while the Department of Public Health's budget is down \$13 million for the coming year, we have maintained our corporate commitment to HIV/AIDS funding at \$3.6 million. We have also continued aggressive efforts to secure grants at the federal level, resulting in an overall budget of about \$40 million for HIV/AIDS programming.

We are also looking for other ways to help. In 2002, the City sold 20 vacant parcels near Roosevelt Road and Kedzie Avenue to AIDSCare for a nominal fee of \$1 per lot for the development of a \$11 million HIV/AIDS care campus. This land has an appraised value of \$440,000. The North Lawndale AIDSCare Campus will be a national model, in that it will be the first in the country to offer such a wide range of services in a centralized campus setting. It will provide supportive living for those who require direct, HIV-related care, independent housing for those requiring less daily services, and medical treatment and counseling for all of the residents.

Again, we are committed to this issue and will certainly keep the request in mind as we prepare our 2004 Budget, but much depends on economic recovery.

"Do you support mandatory HIV testing under any circumstances?"

No. There is no evidence that suggests that mandatory testing achieves public health goals. To quote the Joint United Nation Program on HIV/AIDS, "Voluntary HIV testing accompanied by counseling has a vital role to play within a comprehensive range of measures for HIV/AIDS prevention and support, and should be encouraged. The potential benefits of testing and counseling for the individual include improved health status through good nutritional advice and earlier access to care and treatment/prevention for HIV-related illness; emotional support; better ability to cope with HIV-related anxiety; awareness of safer options for reproduction and infant feeding; and motivation to initiate or maintain safer sexual and drug-related behaviors."

"Do you support placing the City's rental assistance program under the control of a third-party administrator?"

Yes, if it's needed. I am certainly sensitive to the trauma that housing instability can cause to an already vulnerable population. I also have no problem accepting that someone else can deliver a service better, and more efficiently, than government. Moving fiscal administration of programs to a third-party often enables the City to focus on ensuring that quality services are being delivered to the people who need them. We are already using or seeking third-party administrators for other programs, such as Ryan White Title I, for the very reasons you mention. I believe the AIDS Foundation is already the third-party administrator for the Department of Public Health's rental assistance program. I would be open to looking at third-party administration for other rental assistance programs as well, if City processes are causing delays that put people at risk.

"Do you support comprehensive, age-appropriate and medically accurate health education that includes sexuality and HIV prevention education for grades kindergarten through 12 in all Chicago public schools?"

Yes. The Chicago Public School's Family Life & AIDS Education Program contains a sex education component that values abstinence and, at age appropriate levels, discusses contraceptives and condoms. Beginning in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students receive instruction on the causes and prevention of STDs, including HIV. I support the decisions of the Chicago Board of Education and its health education experts regarding the content of the public school family life and AIDS education curriculum.

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**Paul L. Jakes, Jr.**

No response.

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**Joseph McAfee**

See candidate questionnaire response on page 4.

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**Patricia McAllister**

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit a statement concerning HIV/AIDS in Chicago. I am going to address some of the current issues of your organization.

City Funding: I totally support an increase of \$1 million in funding for HIV prevention services. At the rate that AIDS is increasing in Chicago, I find that it is unreasonable that the mayor and the city council should have to debate on this issue. Note: There was no debate for the raises of the mayor and the aldermen.

Syringe Availability Campaign: I also agree with the issue of allowing adults to purchase sterile syringes at pharmacies without a prescription.

According to a report: "After reviewing all of the research to date, the senior scientists of the Department and I have unanimously agreed that there is conclusive scientific evidence that syringe exchange programs, as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy, are an effective public health intervention that reduces the transmission of HIV and does not encourage the use of illegal drugs."

Source: US Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher, Department of Health and Human Services, Evidence-Based Findings on the Efficacy of Syringe Exchange Programs: An Analysis from the Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General of the Scientific Research Completed Since April 1998 (Washington, DC: Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2000), from the website of the Harm Reduction Coalition at <http://www.harmreduction.org/surgreview.html>.

To conclude, I will say that I support the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, and that I will work to do everything in my power to secure the funding, and all other sources of support that this organization needs, in our hope to eliminate this disease.