

Rabbi Steve Gutow, executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs on World AIDS Day, 1 December 2006

We are in the midst of World AIDS Day—we are faced with an America that leads the world but could do much more. The funding needs are unambiguous. Health care workers must be found and trained. Universal treatment by 2010 is the promise. It must be kept. Women and children, who are often the most vulnerable must be taught and educated and must be protected from unwanted sex. Rape is very evil all by itself but when rape also brings on a disease called AIDS, it becomes a deathly evil.

We all have work to do. We can thank this administration and this Congress for what they have done and it has been quite a lot more than was ever done in the past but we must insist they do more. Our traditions teach us that this disease be conquered. Our understanding of America demands that our nation do all it can to stop AIDS. Today we stand up; tomorrow we keep working. We will look at our religious traditions, the words of our prophets, the values of our nation and then we will look at ourselves. Our very essence as human beings is at stake. G-d will be watching us and we best be doing the right thing.