

Structured for Success: Centralized Coordinating Authority under PEPFAR vs. International Pandemic Preparedness

Since its creation, PEPFAR—the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—has been led and expressly controlled by the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator—a Presidentially nominated, Senate-confirmed, Ambassador-level position reporting directly to the Secretary of State.

This position centralized decision-making authority and control of the entire PEPFAR and U.S. global AIDS response in a clear structure enabling the program to remain focused, coordinated, and directed at the singular mission of saving lives, preventing new HIV infections, and caring for those affected by the pandemic. While PEPFAR leverages the unique strengths, relationships, and technical expertise of other federal agencies—USAID, CDC, DoD, and others—ensuring that all programming is aligned for maximum effectiveness, it remains under the express obligation of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator.

Through the Global Health Security and International Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response Act, Congress has proposed creating a new Ambassador-at-Large for Global Health Security and Diplomacy. Comparatively, the decision-making powers of the new Ambassador for setting and controlling U.S. policy, focus, programmatic interventions, and budget and resource allocations to improve global health security and pandemic preparedness are not centralized. The proposal to delegate control across the State Department, the Administrator of USAID, and Secretary of Health and Human Services among others will create more opportunities for uncoordinated action and mission-creep, and less ability to keep U.S. government actions focused on specific, achievable outcomes.

The table below provides side-by-side comparisons of the statutory authorities and duties of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and the proposed Ambassador-at-Large for Global Health Security and Diplomacy.

Authorities and Duties	U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator	Ambassador-at-Large for Global Health Security
Budget and Resource Allocation Authorities and Duties	To transfer and allocate funds to relevant executive branch agencies; and	(No equivalent authorities or duties)
	To provide grants to, and enter into contract with, nongovernmental organizations (including faith-based and community-based organizations), partner country finance, health, and other relevant ministries, to carry out the purposes of section.	
	Publicizing updated drug pricing data to inform the purchasing decisions of pharmaceutical procurement partners.	
Interagency Coordination of Policy, Activities, and Response	Ensuring, through interagency and international coordination, that HIV/AIDS programs of the United States are coordinated with, and complementary to, the delivery of related global health, food security, development, and education.	Ensure effective coordination, management, and oversight of United States foreign policy, diplomatic efforts, and foreign assistance funded with amounts authorized to be appropriated pursuant to section 5564(a) that are used by the Department of State to advance the relevant elements of the U.S. global health security and diplomacy strategy ... (a) by—
	Avoiding duplication of effort	Avoiding duplication of effort and collaborating with other relevant Federal departments and agencies;
	Establishing an interagency working group for the purposes of coordinating activities relating to HIV/AIDS, including: a) meeting regularly to review progress in partner countries toward prevention, treatment, and care objectives; b) helping identify countries to consider for increased assistance based on the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in those countries, as well as government commitment to address HIV/AIDS, relative need, and coordination with other significant actors; c) assisting the Coordinator in the evaluation, execution, and oversight of country operational plans; d) reviewing policies that may be obstacles to reaching targets for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care; and e) consulting with representatives from additional relevant agencies.	Leading, in collaboration with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Administrator of the USAID, and other relevant Federal departments and agencies, diplomatic efforts to identify and address current and emerging threats to global health security;
	Coordinating overall U.S. HIV/AIDS policy and programs, including ensuring the coordination of relevant executive branch agency activities in the field, with efforts led by partner countries, and with the assistance provided by other relevant bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and other donor institutions to promote harmonization with other programs aimed at preventing and treating HIV/AIDS and other health challenges, improving primary health, addressing food security, promoting education and development, and strengthening health care systems.	Ensure, in collaboration with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Administrator of the USAID, effective representation of the United States in the Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response;
	Resolving policy, program, and funding disputes among the relevant executive branch agencies	

Authorities and Duties	U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator	Ambassador-at-Large for Global Health Security
Operate Internationally	To operate internationally to carry out prevention, care, treatment, support, capacity development, and other activities for combatting HIV/AIDS;	Operate internationally to carry out the purposes of this section;
Oversight and Accountability Authorities and Duties	<p>The Coordinator shall have primary responsibility for the oversight and coordination of all resources and international activities of the United States Government to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including all programs, projects, and activities of the United States Government relating to the HIV/AIDS pandemic under the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 or any amendment made by that Act.</p> <p>Ensuring program and policy coordination among the relevant executive branch agencies and nongovernmental organizations, including auditing, monitoring, and evaluation of all such programs.</p> <p>Ensuring that each relevant executive branch agency undertakes programs primarily in those areas where the agency has the greatest expertise, technical capabilities, and potential for success.</p> <p>Directly approving all activities of the U.S. (including funding) relating to combatting HIV/AIDS in Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia. Other countries may be designated by the President, including those where the U.S. is implementing HIV/AIDS programs as part of its foreign assistance program. Priority will also be given to countries with a high prevalence of HIV or risk of significantly increasing incidence of HIV within the general population and inadequate financial means.</p> <p>Establishing due diligence criteria for all recipients of funds appropriated for HIV/AIDS assistance pursuant to the authorization of appropriations under section 401 of the United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7671) and all activities subject to the coordination and appropriate monitoring, evaluation, and audits carried out by the Coordinator necessary to assess the measurable outcomes of such activities.</p>	Developing and updating, as appropriate, in collaboration with the Administrator of USAID and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, related policy guidance and unified auditing, monitoring, and evaluation plans;
Stakeholder Engagement Authorities and Duties	Holding annual consultations with nongovernmental organizations in partner countries that provide services to improve health, and advocating on behalf of the individuals with HIV/AIDS and those at particular risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, including organizations with members who are living with HIV/AIDS.	<p>Use detailees... from relevant Federal departments and agencies and hire personal service contractors, who may operate domestically and internationally, to ensure that the Ambassador-at-Large has access to the highest quality experts available to the United States Government to carry out the functions under this subtitle;</p> <p>Promoting greater donor and national investment in partner countries to build health systems and supply chains for global health security and pandemic prevention and preparedness;</p> <p>Securing bilateral and multilateral financing commitments to advance the Global Health Security Agenda, in coordination with relevant Federal departments and agencies, including through funding for the Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response;</p> <p>Working to enhance coordination with, and transparency among, the governments of partner countries and key stakeholders, including the private sector;</p>
Other	<p>Working with partner countries in which the HIV/AIDS epidemic is prevalent among injection drug users to establish, as a national priority, national HIV/AIDS prevention programs</p> <p>Working with partner countries in which the HIV/AIDS epidemic is prevalent among individuals involved in commercial sex acts to establish, as a national priority, national prevention programs, including education, voluntary testing, and counseling, and referral systems that link HIV/AIDS programs with programs to eradicate trafficking in persons and support alternatives to prostitution.</p>	<p>Perform such other functions as the Secretary of State may assign.</p> <p>Providing regular updates to the appropriate congressional committees, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives regarding the fulfillment of the activities described in this paragraph.</p>