

Office of the Mayor
SAN FRANCISCO



FRANK M. JORDAN

April 19, 1995

Mr. Mark Barnes, Executive Director
AIDS Action Council
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20009

Dear Mr. Barnes:

It was with great displeasure that I read your recent "Viewpoints" column in the *Washington Blade*. As the Mayor of San Francisco, I find it difficult to understand your challenge to the efforts of the CAEAR Coalition (Cities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief).

Given that San Francisco continues to be so disproportionately impacted by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and given that our per capita caseload still exceeds that of all other major metropolitan areas in the United States, we rely upon the funding from the Ryan White CARE Act to maintain our fragile HIV/AIDS continuum of care for low income and underinsured San Franciscans living with HIV disease.

As such, the successes of the CAEAR Coalition have made a tremendous impact on San Francisco. At this juncture, I believe that rather than engaging in criticizing other national AIDS organizations, we would be better served by collaboration, cooperation, and respectful engagement. As the Mayor of San Francisco, I continue to support the CAEAR Coalition. I also support the excellent and comprehensive HIV/AIDS service organizations that make San Francisco a model city of compassion and care.

In my role as Mayor, I have been outspoken regarding the need to reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act expeditiously without damaging the safety net of essential services for either cities or states in the process. I remain concerned that we will damage San Francisco, in spite of the fact that our need continues to grow every year. My office will continue to work, in every way possible, for the reauthorization of this critical legislation. It is essential that everyone do so, and not waste time challenging the integrity of other national AIDS organizations.

I rely on the HIV/AIDS public policy individuals and organizations from San Francisco to advise my office as to our next steps in this process. I also know that as a City and County, were it not for the advocacy efforts of groups like the CAEAR Coalition, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, Mobilization Against AIDS, ACT UP/Golden Gate, Project Inform, the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, the Center for AIDS Prevention

Studies (to name just a few), we would not be in the place we are today regarding HIV/AIDS services. Their work has been indispensable.

As Mayor, I know that it is never easy working across differences, be they political or substantive. Nonetheless, the challenge we must embrace in the struggle against HIV/AIDS is to work across differences, to value diversity, and to move forward together so that people who are affected by HIV receive the best possible prevention, care, research, housing, substance abuse and mental health services. To do any less is unacceptable.

Sincerely,



Frank M. Jordan
Mayor