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Global Challenges | Canadian HIV/AIDS Advocates Call for Increased Efforts From Next Government To Fight HIV/AIDS
[Oct 14, 2008]

A coalition of Canadian HIV/AIDS organizations led by the [Canadian AIDS Society](#) on Thursday called for the country's next elected government to reinstate social support and other resources for people living with HIV/AIDS, the [CP/Yahoo! News](#) reports. The call came after the coalition contacted Canada's five main political parties to ask them about their stances on issues surrounding HIV/AIDS. It also comes in response to reductions in HIV/AIDS funding by the government since 2005, which has resulted in what the [Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network](#) estimates is an overall funding reduction of 6.57 million Canadian dollars, or about \$5.5 million. In addition, the current government has redirected 5.2 million Canadian dollars, or about \$4.5 million, to HIV/AIDS vaccine efforts, according to the network (King, [CP/Yahoo! News](#), 10/9). The Canadian AIDS Society reports that a government initiative in 2004 committed to increasing federal HIV/AIDS funding from 42.2 million Canadian dollars -- or about \$36 million -- to 84.4 million Canadian dollars -- or about \$72 million -- by fiscal year 2008-2009, the [Toronto Star](#) reports. However, funding, which should have reached \$74.7 million this year, was lower by 11.8 million Canadian dollars -- or about \$10 million -- according to the Canadian AIDS Society.

Monique Doolittle-Romas, executive director of the Canadian AIDS Society, said that the groups have been "stunned by the silence surrounding HIV" during the federal election campaign, adding, "This is a topic worthy of discussion, especially since HIV/AIDS is preventable." Out of the five parties contacted, the coalition has received commitments from four -- the Liberals, the Green Party, the Bloc and the New Democratic Party -- that they will provide funding for HIV/AIDS initiatives and support for harm-reduction programs, according to Doolittle-Romas (Talaga, [The Toronto Star](#), 10/10). The parties also agreed that funding for community programs is necessary, Doolittle-Romas said ([CP/Yahoo! News](#), 10/9).

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