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**Empowered Campaign
Kaiser Family Foundation
April 15, 2013**

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DREW ALTMAN: Alright, well hello everyone. I'm Drew Altman. I think you, I hope you know I'm Drew Altman and on behalf of the Kaiser Family Foundation and Tina Hoff and our incredibly dedicated staff who run Greater Than AIDS with our colleagues at the Black AIDS Institute and Dr. Vignetta Charles from AIDS United who's a long time colleague and a great HIV expert.

And Valerie Jarrett, who I think you all know. I'll just say, I think Valerie must not know she left Chicago for Washington yet because she quietly makes so much happen that wouldn't otherwise happen. Like this event today and this initiative and wants absolutely no credit for it, which is a totally un-Washington thing to do.

And on behalf of Congresswoman Barbara Lee, who is the leader that you think of on HIV on Capitol Hill period. And on behalf of the incomparable Alicia Keys. Welcome to the Barbara Jordan Conference Center.

Just looking around the room I also want to recognize our great colleague and frequent partner, Grant Colfax who heads the White House Office of National AIDS Policy who's with us today. I'm anxious to recognize Leisha McKinley-Beach who's representing my really good friend, Phill Wilson and the Black AIDS Institute. They've been our partners in Greater Than AIDS right from the very beginning.

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And I will just tell you that Barbara Jordan would have just loved to be here today. I wasn't planning to do this but it's very short. I will tell you my favorite short Barbara Jordan story. In 1991 I went to South Africa, we do a lot of work in South Africa with Barbara Jordan. And we did big things. Like we met with Mandela, which was amazing of course. But Barbara said she wanted to meet with the head of the far-right African apartheid resistance. So we set up that meeting and it was in a little hotel and there were just the three of us and the great orator, Barbara, when she's angry gets — got stonily silent. That was what she did. And so we sat there, she was in her wheelchair and about 15 minutes into this meeting, this guy stood up and he said, look, I want you people to know I don't like what you're doing in my country and I'm prepared to give my life to stop the blacks from taking over this country. And Barbara looked up from her wheelchair and she said, "Well sir, we may just need to take you up on that kind offer."

Barbara would have loved to meet Alicia. She, one of her—one of the other things she once said was "The 20th century will not close without the power of women being keenly felt." She would have loved to have met Alicia Keys today.

I've been involved in the fight against HIV since, I'm as old as I look, since the mid-1980's, and feel. And when we started the Kaiser Family Foundation in the 1990's, we made HIV

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a top priority and we work on HIV issues in everything that we do. And our work on Medicare and Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act and Ryan White and our polling and survey research programs, which many of you follow in our global health programs through our non-profit news service, Kaiser Health News, which follows all the developments in HIV.

But our most visible and powerful efforts on HIV, that's the work we do in our big media campaigns like Greater Than AIDS and now the new Empowered campaign led by Alicia Keys which we're here to talk to you about today.

Over the years, since the beginning of the epidemic, there have been highs and lows. In the fight against the epidemic for me, personally, I mean, in the fight against the epidemic, I'm not talking about my life, but for me, there also have been moments of really special inspiration. And one of those moments was when Alicia Keys made HIV and women her cause and created the Empowered campaign. I do find her commitment to this issue really inspiring. She made it her business to spend real time with women with HIV and she continues to do that all the time.

It was Alicia who requested the special report on women and HIV to get out the facts, which we prepared and is in your packets today. It's just, we hear from people, especially women, all the time through Greater Than AIDS and it is an inspiration to people and it is really making a difference.

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Valerie Jarrett's commitment to HIV is also, I think, very special in a different way. I'm a former political scientist and I would certainly observe that Valerie's role as a presidential advisor is historically unique and it will one day appear that way in the history books.

And while she counsels the President on many things, she has also been a constant voice in the White House on women's issues and also on issues of HIV. And she has quietly helped to make countless initiatives like this one happen. And she's been a great friend to our organization which we very much appreciate.

Since being elected in 1998 to represent California's 13th District, which is not far from our headquarters in Menlo Park, California in the 14th District, I don't think anyone has been a more consistent voice on HIV issues in the Congress, whether it's PEPFAR, or the Global Fund or the domestic HIV issues, than Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Everyone in our field recognizes that it would be a 100-percent vote if we put it to a vote.

So today we introduce Empowered as a new arm of Greater Than AIDS, we release our new report on women and HIV, but hopefully, really, we add new energy and leadership and especially focus where it is most needed. I have long felt strongly that focusing our efforts on communities and

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populations where there is greatest need is just vital to making progress in the fight against HIV.

And actually, the President's National AIDS Strategy does that for the first time as a matter of national policy. I don't think it's received enough recognition for that. And Empowered does that too by focusing on women and HIV, but also on the broader role of women in the overall fight against the epidemic.

It's no secret that HIV predominantly affects gay men and black women in our country but we also know from our Kaiser surveys, which many of you have seen, that fully half of the American people at this point in the epidemic now know someone with HIV. So this is actually a conversation to be had by everyone and usually in families and in communities across the country, when it comes to HIV, but also when it comes to anything that has anything to do with health care, it's women that lead that conversation.

So again, on behalf of all of us, but especially on behalf of our incredibly dedicated staff who run the Greater Than AIDS campaign, thank you all so much for coming, for being with us. And it's my pleasure now to introduce Valerie Jarrett.

VALERIE JARRETT: I said, that was very nice Drew. Thank you. Thank you for that wonderful, wonderful introduction and for your leadership of the Kaiser Family

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Foundation. From everything from funding, the National Survey on Youth and AIDS and other very important research to executing major public awareness campaigns. And we are so, so grateful to you Drew and the Kaiser Foundation for all of the great work that you do improving public health.

And thank you for having us here in the Barbara Jordan Conference Center. My goodness. Does she not embody the word empowered, in everything she did in her career.

So I think everybody feels very good right now. So we're getting off to a really wonderful start. I want to begin by recognizing, as Drew did, Congressman Barbara Lee. Not only does she head up the HIV Congressional Caucus, but she is a fierce and tireless advocate. There isn't a single time that I've seen her since I've known her, she's laughing because she knows what I'm going to say, where she does not give me a document and make a case for something that the President should be doing. Always recognizing his extraordinary leadership and how much he has accomplished but there's always more work to do.

And when I had the privilege of visiting her district a couple of years ago with her, she made sure that I, in addition to everything else that I had planned, she took me to one of the community health centers that had recently opened, funded by the Recovery Act and walked me through the halls and showed me the lives that that center is touching each and every day.

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Thanks to the partnership of the President and the hard work that the Congresswoman has done and Congress. So I think a little round of applause for Barbara Lee. [Applause]

And of course, I'm going to recognize my friend, Alicia Keys, who is just extraordinary. She has inspired the world with her music but she has motivated us with her actions. And through her willingness in the midst of an extraordinary career to decide to make this issue important and not just write a check but to show up, to be present, to engage, but mostly to just really care. So please, recognize my girlfriend.
[Applause]

So I think you get that I am thrilled to be here. To be a part of the Empowered movement along with the Greater Than AIDS that will help turn the tide on AIDS, I am so confident. This is a second event at Kaiser that Alicia and I have attended within the last year. We were here last July and we are delighted to be back.

The first time we were here, we put the spotlight on black women in D.C. who are living with AIDS, who are HIV positive or living with AIDS. And it was in the middle of the national, International AIDS Conference which we were so delighted to be able to host here in the United States because President Obama got rid of the travel ban on people who are HIV positive or who have AIDS and we thought in the midst of an

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international conference, it would be so important to look at an issue right here at home, in the nation's capital.

And so we had this deeply moving conference with many women who are either HIV positive or who have AIDS and it was Alicia and my intent to lift them up and to put the spotlight on this issue, here in the District and to talk about what we could accomplish together. But I have to say to you, and Alicia, I know you agree with this, their strength, their courage, their resilience, their good spirit, their humor and willingness to laugh and be so open about their life stories, lifted us up. Those women were truly amazing and I know a few of them are here with us this morning. So please also, let's give them a round of applause. [Applause]

So I returned here today because of the strong support that the Obama Administration from the President to myself, to Grant and everybody who works on this issue, want to give to Alicia's launch of Empowered, which she will describe to you shortly.

Now as you know, the HIV crisis touches every corner of the globe. And it's personally touched so many of us including me. Every day I carry the heartbreak of my sister-in-law who died nearly 20 years ago from AIDS. And when I think about Julie and the fact that she left behind this darling, darling daughter who was five at the time and is now grown and attended the conference with me last year, and I think about the fact

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that she went months without being properly diagnosed because back then, nobody really thought to test a married mom for HIV. So by the time she was finally diagnosed, it was too late.

I know we all have tragic stories about how HIV and AIDS have affected our families or our friends. And these stories are what has propelled us to continue to fight to end this disease. And while we have made great progress, and we have made great progress, HIV continues in the United States with about 50,000 new HIV infections each year. And about one quarter of the new HIV infections are among women but three quarters, three quarters of the new infections, are among women who are black or Latino. Three quarters. The rate of new HIV infections among African-American women is 20 times higher than compared with white women, which Drew mentioned in terms of the disproportion. And among Latinos, the rate is four times higher.

So there is no doubt the statistics are sobering. But here's the thing. Every part of society has a role to play in ending AIDS. On our end, President Obama has recognized and demonstrated the need for immediate action and here just a few of the steps that we have taken.

First, in July of 2010 President Obama released the nation's first comprehensive National HIV/AIDS Strategy, which is a blueprint for how, together, we can make great progress in this fight. The grow of the strategy is to prevent as many

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infections and to save as many lives as possible including through reducing health disparities, improving health and wellness for everyone living with HIV.

To this end, the President's 2014 budget that he just released last week, includes over \$23 billion to address HIV/AIDS in the United States. Including an additional 10 million from the 2012 Center for Disease Control budget that provides critical prevention and intervention funds. And it also includes an additional 20 million for a total of 2.4 billion for the Ryan White Program to increase access to life extending care and treatment.

The Ryan White Program, as many of you may know, was named after a young man who was diagnosed at the age of 13. He fought courageously against discrimination and for his right to go to school the way all children go to school. Today the program that bears his name works with cities and states and clinics and local community based organizations to provide HIV care to more than a half a million people each year.

For women specifically, thousands of women at risk for and living with HIV will benefit from the Affordable Care Act, which President Obama signed in 2010. And Drew and I were just talking about all of the work he does and for the Affordable Care Act. Thanks to this law, insurance companies are now required to provide women with access to a range of preventive services including HIV testing without any cost sharing. And

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starting next year, insurance companies will be prohibited from charging women higher premiums than men or denying insurance for pre-existing conditions, including HIV. How many of you were aware of those two provisions? I just want to see a show of hands. Most of you but not everybody. Alright.

So you walk away from here and one of our responsibilities, one of my asks of you is to tell people as we have the conversation, make sure that everybody you know, knows what's available to them. So many people don't go in for testing because they think it's going to cost them something. They can't afford the co-pay. No longer. No longer. And no longer will women, simply because they're women, or simply because you happen to be HIV positive, be discriminated against by insurance companies. That's when you need your health care the most.

We are also addressing the fact that women who live with HIV are at a greater risk of experiencing domestic violence or assault. And I know that hits close to home to several of you. You're glad I said that. Yes, exactly. Me too. That's why the President established a working group focusing on the intersection between HIV/AIDS, violence against women and girls and gender related health disparities. We need holistic solutions. And the working group addresses that need.

Recently released national data does include some good news. HIV infections among women dropped by 21-percent between

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2008 and 2010. And we're hopeful that that trend continues and it will, in part, because of this initiative. However, stigma and misconceptions continue to be significant drivers in HIV, keeping many from talking openly, using protection, getting tested, and starting and staying on treatment. Not just starting, but you have to stay on your treatments.

At a government level, we continue to address HIV related stigma as well, which we know is a tremendous barrier to women seeking care. For example, the United States Justice Department and Labor Department aggressively pursue cases of alleged discrimination. Something else that's important for everyone to know. Since 2010, we've opened over 40 HIV discrimination cases and we recently settled four cases in just five weeks this year.

In addition to the progress of the Obama Administration that we are making on a policy level, today's Empowerment launched by Alicia, attests to the fact that all, and I mean all of us, have the responsibility and the ability to help in this disease. Everyone in this room, everyone who is watching through the live stream, everyone around the globe, can play a role. That's why Alicia's campaign is so exciting to us. Alicia knows what we all should know. And that is the enormous power women have to turn this epidemic around.

It was no accident then, that in the same sentence in this year's State of the Union, President Obama spoke of

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reaching an AIDS-free generation in the same sentence when he talked about empowering women. We can turn the corner on the AIDS epidemic but we will only succeed if we embrace the power that we already have.

In closing, I'd like to share a story about a woman who's done just that, who I understand is here with us today. Last December, the White House hosted a World AID panel. One of our panelists was Stephanie Brown, a courageous young leader and activist who was diagnosed with HIV when she was 19. Today, she advocates for greater awareness of HIV/AIDS, speaking at community centers and to audiences near her hometown of Fayetteville. And she also hopes to start an HIV advocacy group. Stephanie has used her condition to motivate and empower both herself and others to make a difference. She said, and I quote "I'm here for a purpose. To help others and I'm not going anywhere until I'm done." Well thank goodness for Stephanie. [Applause] You're not going to get away without standing up. Come on. Stand up girl. Come on. [Applause] She should be an inspiration to all of us.

This can be the beginning of the end of AIDS. And when I think about Stephanie, when I look around this room and I see so many amazing leaders and advocates and people who care about this issue as we do, I know that if we can change a room, we can change the District. If we can change the District, we can change the United States. And if we can change the United

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States, my goodness, we can change the world. Thank you very much everyone. [Applause]

TINA HOFF: Thank you for that great set-up Valerie. Our next speaker is Representative Barbara Lee, who as Drew and Ms. Jarrett noted, is a leading voice in Congress on this issue. I'm going to invite her to step up to the podium, if she'd like to speak from there. Among her long list of contributions of course is co-founding the Congressional Caucus on HIV/AIDS, which is a bipartisan effort to maintain U.S. leadership on the issue.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: Thank you so much Tina. And thank you for your tremendous leadership. Good morning.

AUDIENCE: Good morning.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: Let me take a moment to first thank Drew so much for bringing us all together and for your leadership for so many years. Also to the entire Kaiser Family Foundation family. You all, as Valerie said, do amazing work. We couldn't do what we do on Capitol Hill if it weren't for you. So thank you again for this and again, thank you for bringing us together.

I have to just say what an honor it is Valerie, to be here with you. You're such a tremendous woman, great woman, and I just have to tell you, there is nothing — there's no issue that we're dealing with on Capitol Hill, and you know there's some tough issues, that we can't call on Valerie

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Jarrett to help us with. And I just have to say Valerie, your tireless leadership on behalf of women and children around the world, is unprecedented.

Also, and I just have to thank President Obama because, I mean, this goes way back to a commitment he made in terms of developing a national strategy on HIV and AIDS during his first campaign. And I'll never forget on World AIDS Day, several years, probably 2004, right after he was elected, he came out with this brilliant plan which he had promised he would do and never has wavered.

And so thank you Valerie for keeping it going for all of us because I know that with this type of leadership in the White House, we will see an AIDS-free generation in our lifetime. So give Valerie another round of applause. And President Obama because it's making such a difference. [Applause] What a difference an election makes, I just have to say that.

Also, Alicia, you know what? There's no way that we could do any of this work if it weren't for you, your voice, your brilliance, and your activism. You know, we do everything we can do on the inside but in a democracy, it's really the voice of people. And the mobilization of people. And the education of people in our country that really moves anything forward. And so what you're doing with the Empowered campaign is what we need, first of all, just individually for those of

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us who are on the front lines, to feel even more inspired and you're empowering us because I tell you one thing. When I go back to Capitol Hill later on, I'm going to beat the drum even louder. And I can beat it even louder because members who aren't a part of this campaign and who have been missing in action, well I believe that they're going to feel empowered pretty soon, to be part of the fold. So give Alicia a round of applause. [Applause]

As Valerie mentioned, this past July, we all together, we came together when the United States was finally able to host the International AIDS Conference after twenty-some years. For many of us, we worked long and hard to finally get the discriminatory travel ban repealed and thanks to President Obama, it was repealed.

For me, personally, I knew that the AIDS conference would provide an important opportunity to shine a global spotlight on the epidemic that we are dealing with right here in our own country. And so that was such an important moment.

And I know the same is true for you Alicia and for Valerie, because today's amazing announcement is a direct result of that achievement. So thank you again. It helped us really accomplish many of our goals that we had set forth many, many, many years ago. And when I look at all of you today, I'm reminded that there is really a good reason why, for the past 30 plus years, we have never asked if we will win this fight

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against this disease, but only when we will win it. And our brave, bold, and brilliant HIV positive women who are part of this campaign, including Cristina, my constituent, I have to give you a shout out, who's doing amazing work in Northern California. Let me just thank you because you're encouraging us and reminding us that we are all empowered whether we're HIV positive or negative, but we all can make a difference in this disease together. So thank you all for your bravery and your boldness and stepping forward.

And making a difference has been a couple of years, we've made tremendous progress and response to HIV and AIDS every day. Just last week, we celebrated. There were many, many young women involved in this, the first ever National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. [Applause] The first one ever! And Alicia and Valerie, this came out of the International AIDS Conference, it was one of the issues that women asked us to mount on Capitol Hill and let me tell you, I have to thank the White House because they got out front and they got the word out and they helped us declare a National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. So thank you very much. First time ever.

And stories such as the baby girl from Mississippi who was recently cured of the virus. Those stories empower us to keep the fire burning.

And finally, this is long overdue. We were able to pass the Violence Against Women's Act. And that was just such

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[applause] an uphill battle but we did it. We did it and the President signed it. And so we celebrate these victories, but we know that our challenges are many.

Women, especially women of color, are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS as Valerie so brilliantly and clearly laid out in terms of the statistics. But did you know that nearly 50-percent of all people living with HIV reside in the southern states. And African-American women account for 71-percent of all new AIDS cases among women who live in southern states.

And yet we see some lawmakers, they won't — they allow politics to get in the way of expanding access to healthcare, which really, I think, is a human right for all individuals. But again, Alicia, it is a human right, isn't it? [Applause] It is! And so we're going to see this change with We Are Empowered. I'm confident of that.

And so I know that our best days are ahead of us and as you know, on August 1st of last year, through the Affordable Care Act, 47 million American women gained free access to life saving, preventive services, including HIV testing and contraception. The Affordable Care Act also prohibits insurance from denying coverage to individual with pre-existing conditions including HIV and AIDS. I mean, that is just an amazing accomplishment of this Administration. It's just —

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you know, when you think about it, it is so powerful that all of us came together and our President did this.

As in the case for the Affordable Care Act though, congress has an important role to play in creating and supporting legislation to empower women and to achieve an AIDS-free generation. AIDS is a virus, not an ideology. Not an ideology. So Democrats and Republicans and Independents must come together to support funding for HIV programs and support policies that will help us end AIDS. Now that means dramatically expanding comprehensive sexual education in schools and rejecting abstinence only education. We have to do that. [Applause] Our young girls deserve that.

That means fighting stigma and modernizing discriminatory HIV criminalization laws which exist in 32 states and two U.S. territories. And once again, the White House and Department of Justice, they've taken this on with us and we're going to do that. These are archaic rules that affect unfortunately women and women of color.

We've got to repeal the ban on funding for syringe exchange programs, both federally and right here in our own District of Columbia. [Applause] We need to do that. We need to do that. You know who IV drug users are. They're women, unfortunately, and we have to provide access to counseling and prevention and you do that by having a clean needle exchange effort taking place.

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Finally, that means getting our Federal Bureau of Prisons to develop a comprehensive policy to provide HIV and AIDS prevention, testing, and treatment for inmates in federal prisons. [Applause] That's extremely important. To empower women! That's very important! Very important! If we do all these things, which are — happen to be bills and legislation that I'm working on, or will introduce, or part of our appropriations provisions that we must prioritize, we will empower individuals to know their status. We will empower families and communities and women to speak openly, thank you again, about the virus and we will empower individuals to get tested, get treated and to live full and healthy lives.

As a member of the Budget and Appropriations Committee, we must fight to get more funding for the Ryan White Program, for housing for people living with AIDS, for the Minority AIDS Initiative, and at the same time, expanding the Affordable Care Act.

Valerie, I've got to tell you, I've gone through the budget and all our appropriations bills and you guys are right on the mark. Thank you very much. [Applause] Thank the White House because in this very difficult economic moment, you know, they're doing the right thing. So thank you.

Of course, we have to now fully fund the Violence Against Women Act which provides critical investments in our communities that save lives, rebuild families, and prevent

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future crimes. Again on Capitol Hill, we authorize but then we appropriate. And so that's where we are now and we must appropriate the funds for this.

We have a bipartisan and bicameral Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus with more than 70 members. We're getting ready to launch it again this congress. Senator Frank Lautenberg and myself, we've introduced the Real Education for Health Youth Act, that's Be For Real, H.R. 725. That will expand comprehensive sex education in school programs, excuse me, in schools and ensure that the federal funds are spent on medically accurate programs. Medically accurate programs [applause], that's what we are insisting on. We're going to get there because of I am empowered and we are empowered.

Soon I'm going to introduce the Repeal HIV Discrimination Act, which is the first piece of federal legislation on HIV criminalization. Again, I am empowered, we are empowered. [Applause]

I'm really inspired by all of you. You're empowering me to keep doing what I need to do in Congress. It's an honor to be here with so many advocates, allies, including so many inspiring women who are committed to justice and the goal of an AIDS-free generation. And we are on this planet for a purpose, as Valerie said. We each got up this morning with a purpose. Okay? And we are here today, together, for a purpose. Whether it's doing justice or building unity or educating HIV,

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individuals in the country around HIV and AIDS as it relates to women and women of color. And so keep fighting. Keep fighting. Let's, in this moment, really renew our determination to keep fighting until we win our biggest battle, our biggest battle when we never have to recognize another World AIDS Day. Thank you again. Thank you Alicia. [Applause] So much, thank you.

TINA HOFF: Thank you Congresswoman Lee for that perspective from Congress. Our next speaker needs no formal introduction. As Ms. Keys makes her way to the podium I just want to note, she of course has a long history, as many of you may know, working internationally and we're thrilled to be working with her now domestically. And it's thanks to her passion and commitment that we're here again today following the event that you've heard many people talk about from this summer. Ms. Keys.

ALICIA KEYS: Yes. Wow! What a beautiful, incredible room to be in. I'm so honored to be in this room. Ms. Barbara Lee, you're just fiery. [Laughter] I just, I just love that. Every time I sit with you, I'm just like—and I learn so much. So thank you so much for just being so incredible. And everybody for being here. My friend, Ms. Jarrett, really, thank you so much for your support. The Kaiser Family Foundation for hosting. Drew, you're funny. [Laughter] Like man! He's funny! So really—and to everybody in this room,

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really, thank you so much for being here. It means so much that you're able to take some time and join us today because we're each a part of such a movement and it feels so good to be a part of this movement.

So this, you were discussing here today is one that strikes a very, a very personal chord for me. And I first became involved in HIV/AIDS in about 2001 after a visit to a clinic in Africa. And I really had an incredible experience there and it opened my mind and it opened my heart to the AIDS pandemic and it set me on a path for fighting the AIDS pandemic.

Following that visit, I co-founded an organization called Keep a Child Alive and it's an organization that I continue to partner with today and it's my passion and my heart. It's something that really keeps me very grounded and connected to the cause and the issue of what's going on. And what's striking to me the most, I think, when we talk about all of this together, is despite so many differences, is how many similarities unite us in this global fight to end HIV. That knowledge is the best way to overcome ignorance and fear. And that courage is the best way to overcome stigma and shame.

And like stigma, I mean, I think one of the things I've just been thinking about so much lately is just getting over being homophobic. Like, we have to just move on. You know what I mean? Everyone is a beautiful human being with their

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right to choose who they love and that's it. You know what I mean? And we have to respect that because if we allow people to be who they are, then people can be prideful and we don't have to have all this hiding and worry about people not loving you for just being who you are. It's not fair.

And so that, in regards to stigma and shame, it has to like, we are in the future now. We must arrive to the future. So let's be okay, let's like talk about these things and let's encourage people that we know to talk about it [missing audio 00:37:24 - 00:37:30]. I pressed a button. [Laughter] I pressed it again. It's back! [Laughter]

So that empowerment is the best way to overcome complacency. And I think another thing we've been talking about so much is, you know, loving ourselves enough to take care of ourselves.

And knowing that teaching our children to know their self worth and honor their bodies and know that we have to be the ones that tell somebody, look, I'm not comfortable. And it's hard sometimes, you know. There's a lot of pressure in this, especially being young. Shoot, being old is a lot of pressure. You know? You don't want to be the one that's saying no. You want to make people feel good but no, we have to be the ones that know that we are strong enough to say, I honor myself, I honor my life, I honor who I am and this is how I feel. I think we have to also teach that and show that a

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lot. Because it's difficult. Not all of us have that guidance in our lives.

So, and definitely that we as women are the backbone of families and communities. Now that, for sure, is equal wherever I go. That is what I see. And it's a beautiful thing to celebrate. I mean, that's just what we do. We just—that's how we are. And we're amazing. That's why we love our mommas. [Applause] Thank you.

We will never see an AIDS-free generation without harnessing the power and strength of women. The Empowered campaign that I'm so proud of, it builds on my advocacy work with Keep a Child Alive. And my battle cry to put women first.

Over the past ten years I've absolutely witnessed an incredible resilience and strength among, and spirit, among those I've encountered. And most especially, so much in the women, I've had the privilege of meeting so, that's everyone in this room. These are my beautiful friends here. My sister and Erika Rose, I mean, there's my grandmother, my nanna, I mean, these women in my life are really my inspirations and my beacons of light. Women and girls have been infected by HIV since the start but that impact has not been recognized and as sisters, mothers, daughters, and caregivers, we are the backbones of families and communities and entire societies.

I think that most people would be shocked to know that more than 1.1 million Americans living with HIV, one in four,

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is a woman. I mean, I don't know if people really understand that really at this point. You know, I'm not sure that that's really communicated well. I mean, I'm not seeing HIV in the headlines, I'm not talking, hearing conversations about AIDS, you know? It's kind of like, a lot of us would probably think, I think it's okay in America, right? You know? So I think that it's really important that we're starting to talk about this and realizing that this is not the case.

And worse yet, black women have been disproportionately—that is a word for you. [Laughter] And it should be a hard word because it's a big word, it is a bad thing. [Laughter] To be disproportionately affected, accounting for a majority of the new infections among women. I mean, that's a problem. You know? That's a problem. That's not acceptable. But we have to do something about that. We have to do better than that.

You know, one in 32 black women today will be diagnosed with HIV at some point? One in 32? Like that's a lot! You know? And that is something that should be a headline. Where are those headlines? Where is that conversation you know? So that's something that we definitely—if we don't do something about that, that could be the reality. And I know that we're all not about to let that be the reality.

I've had several opportunities to get to know some truly inspiring HIV positive women. Most recently, I've had

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the pleasure of getting to know five extraordinarily, beautifully, gorgeous and smartly intelligent women as part of the—this is our thing, by the way. You can join in. [Snapping fingers?] You know, because you know, you just fly. So you've got to just—so five extraordinary women as part of the development of this campaign. Thank you Kym. You know you started that. We are here to talk about today. So Eva, Cristina, Kym, Jen, and Stephanie. And can you give them like massive love? [Applause] Yes! I love ya'll! I love them so much! Thank you. Yes! Yes! Oh. Talk about shank the spirit, talk about empowerment, talk about leadership, talk about womanhood, talking about glory, these women, I mean, they're my inspiration. Ya'll are just incredible. And my friends. And I'm so proud of us and us.

So these beautiful women shared with me their stories of how they were not just living with HIV but triumphing over it. You know? And with the help of family and loved ones and not only told stories but they also told stories of others who are not as triumphant. And of others who did not have the benefits of treatment and care or a support system. They told stories of friends and loved ones who neglected themselves or of put others first or who felt alone in the diagnosis or who felt powerless or respect to their own protection.

And 30 years after we first heard of AIDS, it's really a tragedy that anyone is still getting infected. It's—and we

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know that HIV is both preventable and treatable, yet because of stigma, we don't talk about it openly. We don't use protection, we don't get tested, we don't stay on treatment and I really feel like that is a very old school thought. It's a very old school thought to kind of hide things and not be open and conversational about it.

I think, and a lot of times our parents teach us that. You know, we're supposed to keep our business at home, keep your—don't put your business in the street. You know what I mean? And a lot of that is confusing because you have to reach out and you have to open up and you have to talk about it and you have to look for support somewhere. Often times we even find our own families won't support us through our most difficult times.

So who do you reach out to, who do you find that you can connect to and relate with? And not to mention that in addition to the stigma, there's still far too many misconceptions about what we think and talk about HIV. You know there's so much ignorance really. The fact that anyone would think if I give this person a hug, I might—or if I kissed this person, you know? It's—but it's true, we're still thinking like that. We're thinking like it's like a sneeze or something and it's not.

We have to make sure that we're educating ourselves and our families and our friends and our loved ones. That's what

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this is all about. It's about talking about it so that we can really open up about it and really start a dialogue about it. I mean, just last year when we were all here in this room or whatever room it was, we were in a room [laughter] and that room was an important room. It was. And I mean, the things that even I learned or thought of or was introduced to, I mean, it really changed my whole mind. You know, it really got inside of me, it really, really was deep for me. And that was because of having a dialogue and an open conversation and people willing to share and talk about it.

So it's definitely time that women see HIV as our issue and embrace our power to change the course of this epidemic. That is why I'm so crazy, ridiculously fired up about introducing you to Empowered. I've had the extreme pleasure of developing this campaign and partnership with the Kaiser Family Foundation as part of the Greater Than AIDS initiative in order to reach women in the U.S. about HIV and to engage community organizations serving women on the ground.

The Empowered campaign features these five extraordinary women that I introduced to you - you guys are so cute [laughter] - in what is a beautiful start to this conversation to help change the way we think about HIV in America. Our goal is to empower women, both living with HIV and allies in the fight in every way possible, to lead in our

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every day lives. Because we all are the voice pieces that talk about this at every moment that we can.

Empowered is about being open, opening up our thinking about HIV. Who it affects, including its impact on women. What HIV, what an HIV diagnosis really means. Like what does that mean? One, knowing the facts, speaking openly, protecting ourselves, asking to be tested, I think is really important. Our knowledge and knowing the benefits of an early diagnosis and ongoing treatment. To reduce the spread. I think too few today are on treatment and benefiting for the advances of it.

The last one is really taking control of our health, which I think is another big one, you know, really, like making that something that is important in our lives, and of what we, as individuals, can do to make a difference. We all, whether HIV positive or negative, have a role to play. We have a role that makes sure that we have access to dignified treatment. Dignified treatment. Very important. And to advocate for quality integrated healthcare for all which is so much of what you touched on, which is very, very amazing and important.

So, we also want women to understand that in all the different roles we play in our lives, you know, as mothers and daughters and sisters and wives and partners and friends, you know, we have a tremendous power. We really do. I mean, all of us as human beings have a tremendous power. You know, we really do. We have an obligation to access and be unafraid of

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that limited well of power that we have to really reach out to each other.

As mothers, we need to, I believe, teach our sons to respect women as well, and respect their bodies and respect their health. I will teach, am teaching my son. You know, it's important. And I think about myself as a mother and I think about a young son that I have, he's two and a half years old and one day he's going to be 12 and he's going to be 13 and 14 and maybe even 11 and 10 because it's getting earlier and earlier. [Laughter] And so you know, he's going to have questions and he's going to have thoughts and feelings and you know, it's important for us to be having this dialogue. By the time—I want—I'm talking to him about it now.

I want it to be something that is not awkward. It's not awkward. Sex is not awkward. AIDS is not awkward. Protecting yourself is not awkward. Condoms are not awkward. You know what I mean? It's not strange. It's life and we've got to talk about it, we've got to be open and really, really just verbal. We've got to be extra verbal now because there's far too many distractions. We have to be like loudly verbal.

So I'm just so grateful to be here today. I'm so grateful that we've been able to create this campaign and that is just the beginning of so many things. Going forward, I'm grateful to everybody for your support. With me, Griffin Schein, thank you. I thank you Peter from Keep A Child Alive

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for your help. Erika Rose, thank you so much to my team who really helps me make this real and come together and allow this to be a living, breathing entity that's going to continue to affect and touch people in the best way.

To my beautiful girls over here, my friends, are just so beautiful as you'll see on the videos. Just sharing with me and sharing with us and being open and beacons like beacons of light.

I would now like to share with you a snapshot of the inspiring conversation I have with my empowered sisters. I hope it leaves the same impression on you as it did on me. A profound connectedness, you know, a true deeper sense of responsibility and the belief that we all have the power to create an AIDS free generation.

[VIDEO 00:50:01]

ALICIA KEYS: I'm Alicia Keys and I am passionate about ending AIDS. I've done a lot of work with international AIDS issues. I was first introduced to it about 2001. That was a big life changer for me and that has set my path about fighting the AIDS pandemic.

I happened to go to this Kaiser Foundation sponsored event. I'm very emotional and that's how it should be, right? But there were these incredible women all in one room and they were sharing their stories, you know. And they were living right here in America and were just like me, you know. And I

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realized right there, I was like, Wow, there's a whole thing going on here in America that I need to turn my attention to as well.

Somehow we might have gotten into this mind state that it's over there or it's really their problem and that's the mistake. It's not just one groups' issue. It's all of our issues. It is in America, it is like right here, right now and we have to start talking about it.

I sat down to talk with five amazing women who are HIV positive. They are confronting the stigma of HIV head-on. Together, we want to change the way you think about HIV. You might know women like them in your own life, they're mothers, wives, daughters, students, caregivers, business owners. They're just like you and they're just like me. And let me tell you. These women are empowered. I was so moved by their strength and passion. They reminded me that as women we are so unlimited in our power.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I was infected with HIV within my marriage. I said, how long have you known? And he said, I don't know Kym. Over ten years. Why haven't we talked about this? Why didn't I know?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Anything negative as a woman you can think of, I was dealing with it. Depression, low self-esteem, on my own, taking care of a child at the time, it was like, okay, I need to find my self worth.

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FEMALE SPEAKER: At nine I started to compare myself to my friends on the playground. So one day I said, mom, what's wrong with me? She broke down that my dad and her had tested HIV positive in '86 and my mom breastfed me. She didn't know.

FEMALE SPEAKER: And I was really beating myself up because I felt like, I'm a straight A student, I just started college, I'm the only girl in the family, I'm smarter than this. How in the hell did I just let this happen to me?

FEMALE SPEAKER: And pretty much everyone who ends up HIV positive says I didn't think it could happen to me. And then it happened to me.

FEMALE SPEAKER: What did it mean to be empowered?

FEMALE SPEAKER: There's that word, freedom.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I get my empowerment from breaking barriers that other people said couldn't be broken.

FEMALE SPEAKER: And you can share your status and have nothing to hide.

ALICIA KEYS: My time with these women showed me that we are all, whether HIV positive or negative, empowered in this fight.

FEMALE SPEAKER: HIV and AIDS affects all of us. And it isn't something that is dirty or bad or only happens to those people.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Right.

FEMALE SPEAKER: It's a health issue.

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FEMALE SPEAKER: My boys, they know me as being straight forward, upfront, and honest. We have sat down and talked about the whole sex thing, HIV, how did I get contracted and I didn't sugar coat it.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Get tested. Know what's going on.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Know what's going on with yourself. Because nobody going to take care of your life like you.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Right. That's true.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I have a husband who's HIV negative and we keep him HIV negative by making sure that I maintain my treatment and we always have safer sex, we always use a condom and that's been 15 years.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Wow!

FEMALE SPEAKER: And so it is possible.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I have been undetectable for 18 beautiful years. [Applause]

FEMALE SPEAKER: The important thing about getting on treatment and staying on it is that it keeps our viral load low and we can extend lives.

FEMALE SPEAKER: We can be mothers.

FEMALE SPEAKER: We can be grandmothers. I mean, these are like who we are as women.

FEMALE SPEAKER: I'm not okay with stigma for another 30 years. Okay. I have things to do.

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FEMALE SPEAKER: You've just got to knock it out the box.

FEMALE SPEAKER: There was no way I was going to let this take me out. You know, it's just like you to take flight or you reach the light. [Laughter]

ALICIA KEYS: Each and every of these women, they are all greater than AIDS, we are all greater than AIDS. So let's do this together. Let's end stigma. Let's open up about HIV and take actions in our every day lives. That can make a huge difference. Whether HIV positive or negative, we all have a role to play.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Breaking the silence and unity, the world will listen when we speak.

ALICIA KEYS: Let's get fired up. Share this video with your friends and loved ones. We are empowered to change the course of this epidemic. Find out more at greaterthan.org/empowered.

[END VIDEO 00:55:52] [Applause]

ALICIA KEYS: Yeah! Yes. I think it speaks for itself. It all speaks for itself and we are here in this room to speak up and speak out because we are empowered. We are powerful and incredible and we have everything to live for and everything to stand for and everything to shine for. So let's go and do that.

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Thank you again for being here and I just want to bring my empowered sisters over for a little, for a little love like that. [Applause] Woo-hoo!

TINA HOFF: You're still staying with us if we can keep you. Yeah. Nothing, nothing like following Alicia Keys and I really have to be upset with the campaign organizers except that's us. So we did this to ourselves.

Vignetta Charles is with AIDS United and I'm Tina Hoff, I run the Health Communication Media Partnerships program at Kaiser are going to give you just a few more updates about the campaign and then we'll open it up for questions.

So thank you. That was, as you can see, she's a phenomenal partner and ally to have in this effort. [Applause] And I think from the video, you hopefully get a sense of the passion that is behind this campaign as well as the key messages and themes.

The one part I just wanted to know that I think personally is the most powerful for me is to hear the line that Alicia says in reference to women living with HIV being just like you and just like me, which is not something that is often heard when we talk about this issue and not something that you often hear from somebody with a profile and this ability of Alicia Keys. And that's an incredibly powerful statement.

Alicia's conversation with our five women, all of whom of course are living with HIV, reinforces that point as she

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talks to them about their hopes and dreams, what's important to them, what gives them strength, as well as educating about this disease and it's impact on women. Both how it's spread, how it is not, which is also an incredibly important misconception that we know. The importance of early diagnosis and treatment and the importance of family and loved ones.

The campaign is a national campaign, it is targeted on communities though at highest risk. It is cross-platform, T.V., radio, print, digital, as well as outdoor, you can see some of the outdoor ads around town, near our office as well as other heavily affected cities around the country.

We're also releasing a half hour video of Alicia's conversation. And I will say, we set out thinking we were just doing a 30 second spot and the conversation was so good and went on so long that we really wanted to share that. So we're releasing that along with the video guide for community screenings and education and I think it's going to do tremendous, tremendous good, along with other informational materials and resources for folks to use.

Kaiser has been conducting HIV campaigns and campaigns on other pressing health issues for more than 15 years now. And that's going back to when antiretrovirals were first just really becoming available. And the conversation we can have today is a very different one.

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The issue, of course, is still a very real and serious one but we've seen great advances. You've heard people here talk about the future, without AIDS, an AIDS-free generation and advances in science and treatment are a big part of that as is of course, direct service programs. But we also think that campaigns like this can play an important role in achieving that possibility. Campaigns like Empowered are critical in getting out information, connecting people to resources and services, keeping the issue on the public agenda and I think very importantly, as you've all heard us talk about today, is addressing stigma, which is really one of the biggest issues holding us back from ending this epidemic.

So I want to keep my comments brief, I want to let my colleague, Vignetta Charles here from AIDS United, talk a little bit about another element of Empowered that we're really excited to announce today to work with organizations on the ground, which are of course, a really vital, vital allies in this whole effort.

VIGNETTA CHARLES: Absolutely. So I just also, since Tina didn't get to introduce herself, I want to say thanks to Tina and Kaiser Family Foundation Greater Than AIDS for their tireless works and the epidemic in raise awareness so just a little round of applause, even though I'm going over my time.

[Applause]

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AIDS United is honored to be up here and partner with these great women when we think of talking the talk and walking the walk, I just, you know, I can't think of a better group. All my heroes in the audience and heroes in the audience just, you all know who you are, but certainly to think that our President has the advice from Valerie Jarrett, who is always in our corner. And when you are from the Bay area like I am, people walk around with pins saying Barbara Lee speaks for me and I think we all in this room can have that pin.

And I have the honor today of meeting Alicia Keys and she is as cool and as grounded and as awesome as you think she is, so I'm honored to have that. Now checking off my bucket list.

But AIDS United is honored to partner with this group and launch this portion of the Empowered program which of the community grants program and AIDS United has worked for two decades to support organizations that serve women around HIV and to be able to partner with this extraordinary group to have investments on the ground for organizations on the ground who know their communities best, I think is a critical element of just investment and awareness. When we think of women, we know that women can be different. We think of how women contract the virus for many populations HIV prevention means reducing the number of partners.

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As we've talked about today, for many women, their greatest risk comes from having a single partner. So HIV prevention is different. That does mean talking about gender and power dynamics and the intersection with violence, as we were talking about from caring for women with HIV. Alicia also said we don't take care of ourselves, which is true.

So if you're doing an HIV and nutrition program for women living with HIV and you deliver a single meal to her home, that meal is going to go to her kids if they're hungry. It's not going to go and get her fed so your intervention has to be about food security for her households, knowing that that woman's going to take care of other people before she's going to take care of herself. And the Empowered Community Grants Program is going to address this and we're going to invest in the organizations on the ground, advisory committee will make the recommendations including Ms. Keys and those recommendations will support projects that are innovative on prevention and care and advocacy for women living within affected by HIV. So we're excited for this.

If you want more information, you can go, the RFP's available in your packet and there's also available on the AIDS United website right now. So with all your iPads, go ahead and look it up and we all have a role to play and so spread the word. [Applause]

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TINA HOFF: Now we'll open up the floor for questions from you. If I could ask if press can go first and also, please identify yourself and your organization. I think I have some colleagues walking around the room with microphones who will come to you if you raise your hands. Any questions? Comments? Yes?

FEMALE SPEAKER: I'm not press, if that's alright.

TINA HOFF: Go ahead. That's alright.

LISA FADER BEDIAKO: [Inaudible 01:04:03] [Laughter]
Good afternoon. My name is Lisa Fager Bediako, I'm with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. And I am one of 19 National Civil Rights Organizations funded by the Centers for Disease Control to focus on HIV. And I also wear another hat. I do a lot of stuff in hip hop and so you mention about normalizing the conversation around HIV. So I used to work for Capitol Records so I know we can make this happen.

And so just last week we had this conversation about Ray Gross [misspelled? 01:04:35] and him talking about using Miley and you know, raping a girl and having sex. So, you know, we're talking about violence against women, we're talking about HIV. How can you help us, particularly in the hip hop community? I've been working with some folks and how can we have that conversation on a bigger dialogue? How can we bring that to, you know—Kaiser can help us get to Viacom. We can

Comment [SL1]: ?

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all sit down with some young leadership and some hip hop artists. How can we do that?

ALICIA KEYS: Yeah. I think [laughter], I think that we have to do it. You know? And I think it's a big conversation.

I think what happens is things tend to maybe become too casual. And people start to think of things, disconnected from their own lives. When you bring it back around to people and say, well don't you have a momma and don't you have a sister and don't you have a—they don't want any bad things to happen to the people that they love. Nobody does. And I think that's kind of what happens.

If we could get around to starting to think—and that's why I really love this Empower campaign and how it meets my work with Keep A Child Alive and becoming a bridge so there's an international conversation, there's a domestic conversation, there's a global conversation.

If we could get around to getting past, kind of figuring out how things feel like separate and start understanding how it's all, it's all one conversation. It's all one thing. It's all one goal and one feeling that we really all have. How many of us would go to the edges of the earth to protect the people that we love. We all would. You know, I mean, there's not one person that's excluded from that.

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So I think you're right. You know, I think it is about having a bigger dialogue. Erika and I have talked about in which ways kind of we start here, we start with knowledge, we start with information, we start with really giving people the opportunity to get introduced to maybe something that's not quite on their radar the way it should be.

And then how do we start taking bigger steps to really making that a bigger conversation? How do we get people who are very influential and talk to so many people you know, that they're our heroes. You know, they're the people that we look up to. They're the ones that we emulate the way they dress, the way they speak, the things they do. So how do we start doing that because everybody's not perfect.

And so many people also need to have an opportunity to kind of get turned on because you're like wow, you know what? I'm kind of not thinking about this the right way. And so it's okay, we can't like blame everybody. We have to try to bring us together to have the opportunity to learn because we're all out here learning and becoming more educated and smart. So I think what you're saying is really super important and we definitely have it on our list of, like our phases of where we'll go and how we'll make the conversation bigger and broader.

And I think it'll actually be really interesting to see the way that people are moved, those that might have even been

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ones that have said things that they shouldn't have said, will be moved to feel completely different when thinking about it on this bigger level, for sure. So I feel you and I'm glad that you brought that up.

JUSTINE LOVE: [Inaudible 01:07:54] [Laughter] My friend. Justine Love, CBS Radio of Washington. Two questions. To Dr. Charles. When and what are the increments of the grants going to be, one for the community and when can I get the video so that we can take it out into the community to empower women? That's the first question.

VIGNETTA CHARLES: Oh. We're doing one at a time? I was like [interposing].

JUSTINE LOVE: So the, there not many grants but [inaudible 01:08:22] grant can do a whole lot with \$5,000 dollars.

VIGNETTA CHARLES: Yeah, yeah exactly. So, these grants are up to \$25,000 to support innovative projects. And the RFP is available now. The grants will go out in the fall.

JUSTINE LOVE: Okay, thank you. That's—and I have access to the video already?

TINA HOFF: Yeah, the video is available to everybody, immediately at greaterthan.org and you can download it, we can get you copies, all of the PSA's are up there as well and they're going to your network tomorrow.

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JUSTINE LOVE: [Inaudible 01:08:52] My next—the second question. This is it, this is [inaudible 01:08:56]. The other one is in reference to I'm empowered because those are my sisters. But what — where is anything going to come out that is dealing with that population that is 11 to 14? Because my young sister, yeah, you're not [inaudible 01:09:17], yeah. The adolescent health. I'll give it to you Dr. Quarter, here.

DR. QUARTER: Okay. Oh.

FEMALE SPEAKER: So she stole my question.

FEMALE SPEAKER: That's right. I was like, she stole the mic, she stole the—

DR. QUARTER: Hi. I'm honored. I'm Dr. Quarter but my main focus, I'm a Pediatrician, Adolescent Medicine, I do WOL Village Talk. I'm also Chief of Pediatrics at the only hospital here in Southeast Washington where folks don't want to be. Born and raised here. And I also work with CDC and some of the Christian leadership and BLCA, Black Commission Leadership on AIDS.

What's so important with my adolescents. I diagnose at least once or twice a week HIV positive. I had a young lady just last week—

ALICIA KEYS: Between 11 and 14.

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DR. QUARTER: Yes. She—well, she's 15 but I told her. You know, I, you say, don't do this, don't do that. She came to me and she's changing her ways, she's stopped running around, it's running away, etc. She said, you told me. She came in for a rash and I just treat for everything and I'm nosy. I want to know everything. I don't care if you tell me you're not having sex. If you have a genitalia, you having sex, as far as I'm concerned, I want to know.

So when I tested her just for that and I brought her back and she said, I just didn't know, she said. And I stopped doing all the things you told me to stop doing but it still happened. And what I'm now going to do in this—you know, she's an honest, do it now, she's telling me how she now is doing things that—advocating and trying to teach 11 and 12 year olds. And I said maybe this is the way that God intended. But you know what? You're bigger than this, you're bigger than AIDS, HIV and for 40, 50 years on, you can then tell your story.

So I'm about trying to have the voice and this video is perfect because most people feel, you know, it's not going to happen to me. And that's all our sisters up there.

So I commend you and I just wish that others like you would step out and be so bold because it's so important. And it's not one of those popular things to talk about. But again,

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I thank you and this is wonderful. I thank you Tina and Dr.
[inaudible 01:11:15].

ALICIA KEYS: Wow. I think, boy I think you're bringing up a really important thing though, that I just want to put our minds on actually. We can kind of think about this a little bit because you know, this AIDS between 11 and 15, I mean, this is a big—you know, it's a lot of transitions, there's a lot of things going on obviously in the media and the press all the time.

We always see everywhere, is like how much less can we put on so that we can be beautiful. And it's really sad, you know what I mean? And it's perpetuated in every, every angle. And that's our most vulnerable times at that age and you're trying to fit in and you don't even know much but you kind of just caught up in certain scenarios.

So I think that's a really interesting point and even taking this a step further and even going maybe a level younger and accessing, you know, so that it can happen before it happens. Which is what we're talking about, you know, talking all about it. So it's just [interposing].

DR. QUARTER: The Community Grants, I'm sorry Alicia, the Community Grants Program also focus women and girls.

ALICIA KEYS: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I hear you.

CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA LEE: (inaudible 01:12:20] I mentioned that we launched last week, youth HIV/AIDS awareness

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month. And this is the beginning at least on Capitol Hill of recognition, you know, of young people and the need for prevention messages and reaching out and the Empowered campaign is the perfect timing for this. Because now I think we'll see some synergy as it relates to young people and HIV/AIDS awareness.

TINA HOFF: I think we have time for just one last question. I think the mic just went over there.

BARBARA BAYLOR: Good afternoon. My name is Barbara Baylor and I'm in Congressman Rangel's office and I first wanted to say to Congresswoman Lee, my other colleague and I, we thank you so much for the legislation numerous that you've put forth and we've supported that. So thank you for that.

And thank you Ms. Keys for being here on this important issue. I wanted to ask the question about stigma. I wanted to find out if there was going to be any specific program that you're going to be developing around stigma and what programs are you going to be doing around that that have to do with the black church? I've done a lot of work with that in the past and I'm still getting calls from some churches now who are saying, we don't really want to deal with that issue because then we might be identified as a church who has people who are living with AIDS there. And I—it's just something that, a conversation I was in just about a month ago.

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So I work—I just wanted to know, when we talk about stigma, everybody says yes, oh, we need to do something. But we still haven't really been able to put our fingers on how we're really going to address that and I just wondered if you had any thoughts on that?

ALICIA KEYS: Thank you. I mean, these are two like huge comments that you all both made three, you know, that I'm really resonating with a lot. And obviously, it's a very deep, far reaching you know, conversation which is what I think impacted me so deeply that first day. It's like there's so many layers to it, you know, it's not just one thing. You know what I mean? It's so multi-layered as to how it all folds together.

So you know, I think that definitely, that's what's so great about the Empower campaign is this is just the beginning of it and I think with all of this kind of feedback and information, we can continue to evolve it and develop it so that it really reaches the numerous reasons and talks to the—takes us into the deeper fabric of to how do we get to this place and why is it kind of continuously perpetuated. You know what I mean? Because that's what you're saying.

I mean, that's crazy that that was told to you. That's crazy, scary. Because the amount of people growing up in church and in families and this is the foundation of their whole belief system and of how they feel, they're worth is and

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who are they making proud and who they're not making proud and who they're serving and not—it is very deep and wide and very terrifying to think how many young people are confused about how to be honest about what's going on in their lives.

I think that—you know, I really appreciate your comments and I agree that there is definitely going to be steps and growth to this entire campaign and we can focus on these different realms. I hope that you help me lead it and you help us lead it, you know, so that we can figure out how to really start to penetrate in those other areas.

I really appreciate everybody's feedback and thought and conversations. And this is an open dialogue that we will be having, you know, to continue to evolve it and grow and get where it needs to get.

TINA HOFF: And with that, I want to thank our program and all of you for coming and Alicia for joining us today. I think you can see she would stay here and continue talking with you for hours [laughter] but we have many things going on and when we appreciate all of you coming and having this fabulous conversation with us. So watch and share the video at greaterthan.org. Thanks very much.

ALICIA KEYS: Thank you. [Applause]

[END RECORDING]

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