



Canadian  
HIV/AIDS  
Legal  
Network

Réseau  
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The National Advocacy Committee  
Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign  
Comité d'action national  
Campagne de grands-mères à grands-mères

# News Release Communiqué

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## **MPs TO DEBATE LIFE-SAVING ACCESS TO MEDICINES BILL TODAY**

*Prime Minister Harper can choose to make real change  
on behalf of mothers and children worldwide*

**Toronto, January 31, 2011** — Today, Canadians and civil society organizations focused on human rights, global health and international development are urging Parliamentarians to do the right thing and support critical reform of Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR). Bill C-393 is scheduled to come up for debate in the House of Commons this morning at 11:00 a.m. EST, the first item on Parliament's agenda post-holiday break.

Bill C-393 carries the power and potential to streamline and strengthen CAMR, unanimously passed by Parliament in 2004 with the goal of getting lower-cost generic medicines for HIV/AIDS and other public health problems to developing countries. CAMR, as it currently exists, is an abysmal failure; only one license has been issued to export only one order of one AIDS drug to one country (Rwanda).

Canadians from all walks of life will be watching what transpires in the House of Commons this morning. According to a national poll, 80% of Canadians support reforming CAMR so that developing countries get access to more affordable, life-saving medicines — as does an ever-growing list of prominent political, faith and community leaders.

With Prime Minister Harper returning from his meetings with the United Nations focused on maternal and child health, Parliamentarians now have an historic opportunity to make real change to CAMR and save lives in developing countries. This can be achieved by:

- restoring the “one-licence” solution to Bill C-393 – thereby reducing red tape and making it easier for developing countries and generic manufacturers to use it;
- voting against a prohibitive “sunset clause” amendment that would mean that the critical reforms to CAMR would automatically and arbitrarily end in just a few short years;
- consenting to transfer sponsorship of Bill C-393 from former MP Judy Wasylycia-Leis to a sitting MP and allow the merits of Bill C-393 to be debated, as part of the democratic process; and

- voting for a robust Bill C-393 that includes the one-licence solution when it comes up for a final vote at third reading.

By supporting CAMR reform MPs would be keeping Parliament's promise to the developing world, including hundreds of thousands of mothers and children with HIV and other illnesses who simply cannot wait any longer for political will and leadership.

More information can be found in the attached document "Fixing Canada's Access to Medicines: What you need to know about Bill C-393". More detailed arguments for Bill C-393 by international legal and health experts can be reviewed at [www.aidslaw.ca/camr](http://www.aidslaw.ca/camr).

Following Monday's debate, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and the Grandmothers to Grandmothers campaign will also issue a statement detailing the state of play with the bill and the campaign to fix CAMR.

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