

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Ronald P. Hattis, MD, MPH, (909) 838-4157  
Fax and Messages: 888-BEY-AIDS  
1540 Barton Road #435, Redlands, CA 92373  
National Office: 611 Pennsylvania Ave. #1600  
Washington, DC 22203-1600

## **BEYOND AIDS FOUNDATION BACKS NEW HIV TESTING RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Beyond AIDS Foundation today strongly endorsed new recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for routine HIV testing in health care settings.**

**"This good news is long long overdue," said Beyond AIDS founder Cary Savitch, MD, an infectious disease physician who has treated HIV/AIDS patients since the beginning of the epidemic. "Now is the time to move ahead," he continued. "AIDS has been a public health emergency since the very first case. Why did public health officials wait until over 10 million people died (and over 35 million HIV infections who will eventually die) before initiating the simple tool of universal HIV screening needed to identify all index cases and halt the spread of HIV?"**

**"We urge CDC to accelerate these efforts, because lives are lost with every day of continued politically generated exceptionalism in our approach to HIV/AIDS." said Foundation President Ronald Hattis, MD, a public health physician. "We hope that the release of the new recommendations will be the start of a new CDC activism in support of treating HIV/AIDS like other diseases, so that we can more easily identify and treat infected individuals," Hattis added.**

The Beyond AIDS Foundation has long been in support of making HIV testing more routine and enthusiastically endorses this approach, which its leaders believe is long overdue. The new recommendations will bring CDC into synchrony with Prevention Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA) report of 12/05, "Achieving and HIV-Free Generation" ([www.pacha.gov](http://www.pacha.gov)).

The Foundation hopes to see CDC testimony before Congress on the need for incentives in the Ryan White CARE Act renewal, and urging states to revise laws that currently require written consent and/or pretest counseling for HIV testing. Beyond AIDS also urged that CDC immediately act to assure that its grants will no longer require prevention counseling prior to HIV testing. "Over recent years, we have learned that such requirements have served as an unintentional barrier to routine testing, and to the identification of an estimated quarter million infected Americans who are not aware of their HIV status," said Hattis.