

The **FAIR**
Fair Allocations In Research
FOUNDATION

www.FAIRFoundation.org

7/26/08

Opinion Editor
Orlando Sentinel
33 N. Orange Avenue
Orlando FL 32801

Dear Opinion Editor,

I respectfully request that you consider the following opinion-editorial for publication.

Thank you.

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS: Past National Public Citizen of the Year (NASW)
President and CEO: The FAIR Foundation, a national organization with thousands of members and supporters whose goal is to reverse inequities in NIH research funding and to institute new organ-donor policies to reverse America's organ-donor crisis
Founder: The FAIR Foundation Liver Disease & Transplant Support Group
Author: Coma Life, an autobiographical memoir of life "within" coma and survival over hepatitis C induced liver cancer, coma, 3 liver transplants, heart attack, diabetes & muscular dystrophy

Opinion Editorial submitted by Dr. Richard Darling, DDS

The physician overseeing our country's \$2.9 billion research effort against HIV/AIDS, Anthony Fauci, MD, has stated that the success against HIV is "breathtaking" with patients who "...look and feel well, living gratifying lives."ⁱ Clearly that is not the case in Florida.

Our national organization tracks HIV/AIDS deaths in all fifty states and the District of Columbia.ⁱⁱ We remain perplexed by Florida's poor results in battling HIV/AIDS as evidenced by the FL Department of Health's 2006 Annual Report.ⁱⁱⁱ

While California, Texas and New York report 867, 1029 and 1209 deaths, respectively, Florida's total remains extremely high, indeed, the highest of all states, at 1746 and Florida's sixty percent decline in deaths from its 1995 high of 4,336 deaths is worse than almost every other state.

State	HIV/AIDS Deaths	% decline from high
California	867	89%
Texas	1,029	62%
New York	1,209	85%
Florida	1,746	60%

Perhaps one of the reasons for Florida's poor results is non-factual and misleading public statements by Florida Health Department officials in the Sentinel, including those by Debbie Tucci and Marlene LaLota.^{iv}

Tucci, the program coordinator for the Orange County Health Department, stated, "It isn't who you're sexually active with, just that you are sexually active."

Nothing could be further from the truth. One can only get HIV from having sex with someone who has HIV. One can have as many sexual encounters as one desires without fear of contracting HIV if one is having relations with someone who does not have HIV.

LaLota, of the Florida Department of Health's Bureau of HIV/AIDS, used hyperbole in stating, "We have an epidemic of HIV in older people in Florida." An epidemic is defined as "extremely prevalent; widespread." A one-half percent annual rise in eight years in people over 50 is no epidemic.

Perhaps more funds should be spend on educating the public and the health officials on the CDC's definition of the three ways in which HIV is transmitted, namely, by men having sex

with men, IV drug use, and heterosexual sex with someone who has HIV or who is at risk of having HIV.

With widespread HIV prevention education and use of the excellent drugs that are already available to combat HIV (HAART), Florida's HIV/AIDS death rate should plummet and become respectable.

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS; President & CEO, FAIR Foundation

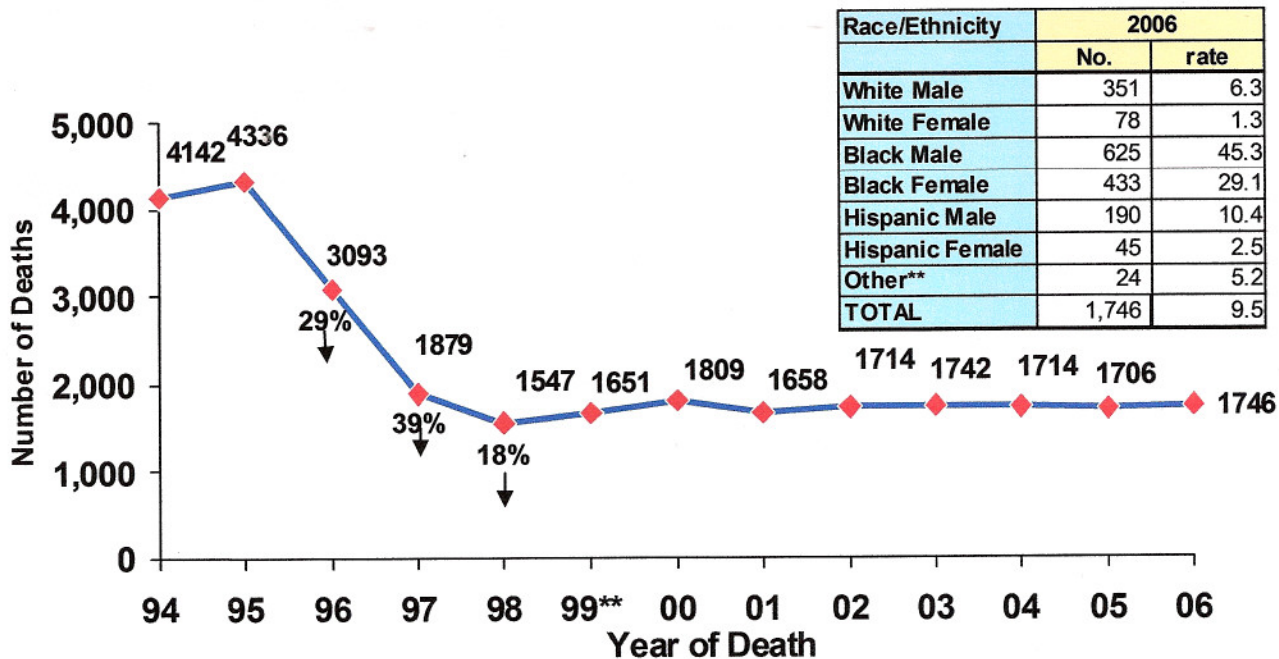
ⁱ <http://fairfoundation.org/fauci.wmv>

ⁱⁱ http://fairfoundation.org/states/hiv-aids_deaths_by_state.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease_ctrl/aids/trends/epiprof/aids06.pdf Page 38

^{iv} http://fairfoundation.org/news_letter/2008/03sept/orlando-sentinel-not_who_u_have_sex_with.pdf

Figure 36. Resident HIV deaths, by year of death, Florida, 1994–2006.



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HIV/AIDS Death Totals by State including the District of Columbia Compiled from each State's Department of Public Health

NOTE* The death totals from many states' (e.g. CA, IL) include deaths from non-AIDS causes, such as automobile accidents, assault, heart attack, etc. In other instances, HIV/AIDS deaths are under-reported due to insufficient reporting and in some instances, opportunistic infections are stated on the death certificate instead of HIV/AIDS.

State	Deaths	Year	% ↓
Alabama	132	2006	72%
Alaska	6	2006	84%
Arizona	33	2006	84%
Arkansas	73	2006	62%
California	867	2007	89%
Colorado	82	2006	80%
Connecticut	74	2006	91%
Delaware	83	2006	54%
District of Columbia	224	2006	33%
Florida	1,746	2006	60%
Georgia Pg. 23	679	2006	N/A
Hawaii	25	2005	93%
Idaho Pg. 17	10	2006	N/A
Illinois	192	2007	89%
Indiana	7	2006	75%
Iowa	16	2007	85%
Kansas	31	2006	77%
Kentucky Pg 24	4	2006	98%
Louisiana	500	2005	N/A
Maine "Epi Profile"	11	2006	84%
Maryland	386	2006	75%
Massachusetts	179	2006	82%
Michigan	214	2007	77%
Minnesota (Table 4)	56	2006	90%
Mississippi	27	2006	89%

State	Deaths	Year	% ↓
Missouri	69	2006	N/A
Montana	6	2006	77%
Nebraska	24	2006	N/A
Nevada	106	2007	71%
New Hampshire	11	2005	N/A
New Jersey	528	2006	79%
New Mexico	51	2006	78%
New York	1,209	2006	85%
North Carolina	425	2006	N/A
North Dakota	3	2006	N/A
Ohio	196	2006	80%
Oklahoma	9	2006	97%
Oregon	48	2006	86%
Pennsylvania	97	2006	95%
Rhode Island	26	2006	87%
South Carolina	249	2005	55%
South Dakota	8	2006	N/A
Tennessee	333	2006	50%
Texas	1,029	2006	62%
Utah	23	2006	85%
Vermont	6	2006	N/A
Virginia	183	2006	81%
Washington	83	2007	86%
West Virginia	9	2006	92%
Wisconsin	72	2006	81%
Wyoming	12	2006	N/A

The total reported above by all fifty states and DC is **10,472**.

The Center for Disease Control estimate is 33 percent higher at **14,016**.

% ↓ = the percentage drop in deaths since the high year in that state

Note: it has been stated by the CDC that the deaths in the District of Columbia have not been reported correctly by the DC Department of Health. In [this 2000-2005 analysis](#) by

the CDC, it is likely that the DC number should be in the vicinity of 324 as opposed to 224 that they report as above. We are waiting for the corrected number to be issued.

In addition to the links attached to each state above, the Departments of Health web sites for all fifty states are provided by the CDC [here](#).

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