



October 25, 2010

Cara Miller  
Associate Director, Public Affairs  
Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Dear Ms. Miller:

In 2009, ATAC released its first "report card" evaluation of Gilead's strengths and weaknesses in several categories important to the HIV community. These include scientific innovation, community engagement, patient assistance and fair pricing.

We are pleased to take this opportunity to provide a brief "progress report" on Gilead's activities during the past year and keep you informed about ATAC's expectations for future improvements.

The membership of ATAC strongly believes that continued progress in the discovery and development of new HIV treatments is critical. Despite great strides made in the efficacy, tolerability, and convenience of antiretroviral therapy over the past few years, too many people with HIV have yet to begin treatment, and an increasing number of those who have begun are finding it difficult to sustain long term adherence. Better HIV medicines, with fewer side effects, greater durability, and more flexible modes of administration should be in development now, so that the next generation of HIV therapy will be ready to meet the need.

In light of the lifetime nature of antiretroviral treatment, ATAC applauds the resurgence of research into finding a "cure" for HIV infection. We thank Gilead for leading in this effort.

The financial burdens of lifetime therapy, for institutions and individuals alike, are increasing daily, with waiting lists for state ADAP programs now having surpassed the 3,000 patient mark. ATAC appreciates efforts to ameliorate this crisis, but finds the best efforts of the government and some companies falling short. We strongly urge Gilead and every company to find new and innovative ways to make HIV treatment accessible and affordable to all who need it.

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## **Gilead Performance Update**

The ATAC membership reported that, during the year since we issued our 2009 Report Card, Gilead has initiated improvements in its patient assistance program and has worked to support ADAP programs. We especially commend Gilead for continued investment in research for improved HIV medicines and for a cure for AIDS. The ATAC membership urges Gilead to continue meaningful dialog with the HIV treatment activist community, especially in seeking consultation on the early development of new drugs. However, the ATAC membership is disappointed in large price increases taken by Gilead during the past year and urges the company to expand its access programs to better serve those who cannot afford Gilead medications.

Here are the points identified by ATAC's membership:

In the past year, Gilead has taken several actions that we believe are in the best interests of people living with HIV, and for which we commend you. These include:

- launching a monthly co-payment assistance program for all Gilead HIV medications and then later expanding that program to cover additional co-payment costs;
- continuing to invest in HIV treatment research, including novel programs devoted to curing HIV;
- seeking community input on the design of studies to test new therapies;
- devoting significant resources to ensure federal contributions to Ryan White and ADAP;
- working closely with microbicide and PrEP researchers and activists and providing drugs to studies of these novel prevention strategies;
- negotiating a price agreement with the ADAP Crisis Task Force to minimize the harm to ADAP from steeply reduced state funds.

In the past year, Gilead has also taken actions that we believe are harmful to people living with HIV. This includes taking the largest single-year increase in price for Viread of any other HIV drug—an increase that was many times higher than most other HIV drug price increases over the same period as well as substantially higher than the industry average for on-patent medications.

In the coming year, we would like to see Gilead take further actions to benefit people living with HIV. These include:

- make urgent efforts to increase the enrollment of women into clinical trials for elvitegravir;
- keeping price increases at or below the consumer price index for inflation;
- continuing to share early data on the development of your experimental HIV drug programs; and,
- participating in the Welvista program for people who have been put on ADAP waiting lists.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns. We greatly appreciate your willingness to remain engaged in constructive dialog with the HIV community. We will be following up with a more comprehensive evaluation in our 2011 HIV Drug Company Report Card next year.

Sincerely,

AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition

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