

5 October 1989

To: Larry Bush

From: Don Francis



Re: Request from Little Hoover Commission

General: Art's time is very limited. I would not recommend he do this if the result of the hearings will be trivial. However, I think the response to AIDS from the Federal and State levels has been so bad that, if this group (or the press) will do something with the hearings, having an opportunity to air the truth could be wonderful. Without the truth, we will never understand our weaknesses and force change to the better.

Background: Response to epidemics traditionally is a very tight cooperation between Federal, State and local authorities. Traditionally expert advice and guidelines, together with resources originate from the Federal government. These are added to by the State. But the ultimate responsibility rests with the local health authorities. This is an appropriate and workable design that has worked well in the past.

This workable design was totally disrupted by AIDS because leadership from Federal and State floundered over issues of homosexuality, sex and drugs. As a result not only was the guidance and resources from the Fed and State lacking, but it was confused and actually impeded the process.

Result: Local programs have been left alone to put the programs together. Local finances are not fluid enough to accomplish this (insurance policy model). San Francisco has done a remarkable job because THE COMMUNITY insisted that the government do its job. And they came to the support of the government and gave of their time and money to support the program.

California legislature also provided state resources but the commitment from the highest levels of government were not only absent, they were confused, embarrassed and a hindrance .

This has got to be one of the worst examples of government response to a major problem in the history of mankind. It should not be exposed only by Randy Shilts. Having a respected Mayor who has personal experience at both the State and local level put this out officially would prevent the rewriting of history out of passivity from those who know.

cc: Myra Snyder



# Little Hoover Commission

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Jeannine L. English  
Executive Director

September 15, 1989

The Honorable Art Agnos  
Mayor of San Francisco  
Room 200, City Hall  
San Francisco, Ca. 94102

Dear Mayor Agnos:

The Little Hoover Commission will conduct a hearing on the coordination of AIDS services in California at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 8, 1989, in the Auditorium at 350 McAllister Street in San Francisco.

Preliminary investigations by Commission staff indicate that San Francisco leads the way in the state with its programs and coordination of services to those with AIDS. As mayor of the city and long-time friend of the Commission, you would be an excellent lead-off witness for our hearing. Your testimony would show that a high level of performance is achievable, and clearly you would be able to give us invaluable insights into improving effectiveness and efficiency throughout the state.

Specifically, the Commission is interested in:

- \* The coordination of funding for AIDS programs. With money coming in from the federal, state and local government levels, in addition to private funding, are there adequate mechanisms to ensure that funding of programs is efficient and well-coordinated? Are there improvements that could make the grant proposal process less of a burden for service agencies?
- \* The coordination of programs and responsibilities. Are there inter-bureaucratic problems associated with the diversity of state and federal agencies involved in AIDS activities that adversely affect local services?
- \* The method the state uses to disburse AIDS program funds. Is the state shift away from contracting with community-based organizations and toward funneling funds through the county health departments a move that will improve services to those with AIDS, or is this an unwieldy mechanism that will waste funds?
- \* Any gaping holes in the net of services the state strives to provide for those with AIDS.



In addition to the above issues, the Commission would be very interested in any other information you have about the state's ability to deal with the AIDS crisis and how its policies and actions affect local governments.

Although the Commission's hearing comes the day after your city-wide election, we are very hopeful that you will be able to attend. As you know, our hearings are usually well covered by the media, and I'm sure the testimony you will be providing will be both positive and of great interest to your local media.

If you are able to attend, we would appreciate a total of 19 copies of your testimony no later than October 13, 1989. Your oral testimony should briefly outline the areas covered in your written testimony, and you should be prepared to answer questions from the Commissioners.

The Commission eagerly looks forward to your participation in the hearing. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me or Kathleen Beasley at (916) 445-2125.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeannine English", written in a cursive style.

JEANNINE L. ENGLISH  
Executive Director