



For Immediate Release

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Standing With Orlando and the LGBTQ Community

(Los Angeles; June 13, 2016)--We, like so many in the LGBTQ community, are heartbroken.

The deadliest mass shooting in our country's history occurred at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, FL, early Sunday morning. It was targeted at LGBTQ people in what should have been a safe space in which we all could celebrate and take pride in who we are. Instead, it became a horrific crime scene in which 49 people were killed and 53 wounded.

There is much that can, and will, be said in the coming, days, weeks, and months about gun control, motives, ideology, and more, but we want to honor our brothers and sisters whose lives were so cruelly and callously ended inside a building where they should have been free to enjoy themselves without fear.

Many LGBTQ people in this country, and around the world, face discrimination, bullying, and violence simply because of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Same-sex marriage rights alone do not mean that fear and hatred disappear. Any LGBTQ person can tell you that they think twice about holding a partner's hand, giving a friend a kiss, or wonder if the clothes they choose to wear that day will mean that someone looks at them a certain way, make a hurtful comment, or worse.

The stories emerging from Orlando about those we've lost compound the hurt, but they also remind us how beautiful our community is and how we support each other even while some would like us to splinter or suffer.

We send our love and support to everyone in Orlando, as well as to our community here in Los Angeles—with whom we were so honored to march at LA Pride this past weekend—and reaffirm our commitment to providing critically needed health and social care services to everyone who needs them.

#Orlando #LoveWins

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AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) was founded in 1983 and is one of the largest nonprofit HIV/AIDS service organizations in the United States. APLA provides bilingual support to more than 6,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County annually and leadership on

HIV/AIDS-related policy and legislation. Additionally, APLA conducts behavioral research designed to inform the development of evidence-based interventions and assists health departments in evaluating their HIV/AIDS services to ensure the delivery of effective and quality programs. APLA also provides administrative and fiscal support to the Global Forum on Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSMGF), which promotes and advocates for the health and human rights of MSM internationally. APLA is proud to be a community-based, volunteer-supported organization with local, national, and global reach. For more information, please visit apla.org.

APLA Health & Wellness (APLAHW) provides primary medical and oral health care, behavioral health services, HIV testing, PrEP counseling and management of eligible clients, STD screening/treatment, and health education and HIV-prevention services, with a specific focus on low-income LGBT people of color living in Los Angeles County. APLAHW is a federally qualified health center that includes: the Gleicher/Chen Health Center in South Los Angeles; the Wilshire Dental Clinic downtown; the S. Mark Taper Foundation Dental Clinic in South Los Angeles; Behavioral Health Services at the David Geffen Center in Mid-City; and a mobile dental facility. APLA Health & Wellness serves more than 8,000 people each year. For more information, please visit aplahw.org.

