Sample Letter to a Government Official

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
 [Date]

[Name of Government Official]
[Official's Title]
[Section of Government]
[Official's Address]

Dear [Title and Name of Official]:

As the world examines the achievements and challenges towards eradicating HIV/AIDS on this World AIDS Day, we must take a critical look at the conflicting realities making women and girls vulnerable to the perpetual face of HIV/AIDS. Access to treatment is extending the lives of HIV-positive people in remarkable ways, and yet unwanted pregnancy among HIV-positive women is on the rise. While incidents of HIV are declining in some African regions, women continue to become infected through sexual transmission at alarmingly high rates. Unless steps are taken to address their HIV/AIDS *and* sexual and reproductive health needs, women and girls will remain the unwilling victims for this deadly epidemic.

Contrary to what some may think, marriage poses significant risk of HIV infection for women in many parts of the world. In fact, more than eighty percent of new HIV infections in women occur in marriage or in long-term relationships. Despite global recognition of the unique vulnerabilities of women and girls to HIV infection, U.S. HIV prevention policy continues to emphasize abstinence education ahead of tools, like condom use, that would better safe-guard women's health. Tragically, it also has all but abandoned its 40 year leadership of support for international family planning. The vast amount of funding for HIV/AIDS prevention are rarely, if ever, integrated with family planning and reproductive health programs that provide desperately needed services to women and their families.

Only through financial and political support for the integration of HIV/AIDS and family planning services do we give women and girls a true chance at survival. That would be something to celebrate.

We urge you to support legislation providing integrated HIV/AIDS and family planning services.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Title and Organization, if relevant]