



Contact: Mitchell Warren +1 (212) 367-1279 or +1 (914) 661-1536, mitchell@avac.org

AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition Welcomes New Director of Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise

New York, October 11, 2007 – The AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC) released the following statement today from Executive Director Mitchell Warren regarding the appointment of Dr. Alan Bernstein as executive director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise:

“AVAC welcomes the appointment of Dr. Alan Bernstein as the Executive Director of the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise. Dr. Bernstein has an impressive background in bringing together researchers, funders and advocates to focus on scientific problems.

“Dr. Bernstein is joining the Enterprise at a crucial time for the AIDS vaccine field. In the aftermath of the recent discontinuation of immunizations in the trial of Merck’s leading AIDS vaccine candidate, many critical decisions that will shape the future of AIDS vaccine research will be made in the coming months. The Enterprise’s goal of fostering real coordination and cooperation among diverse groups working on AIDS vaccine development is now more important than ever.

“Dr. Bernstein now has a central and urgent role to play in helping the field re-focus, set new priorities and develop a coordinated plan to move forward in the search for an AIDS vaccine. We look forward to working with Dr. Bernstein to help achieve this noble and essential goal.”

In its August 2007 report *Resetting the Clock* (available at <http://www.avac.org/reports.htm>), AVAC outlined four critical areas for the Enterprise and its new executive director to address in Dr. Bernstein’s first year:

1. Implement collective planning and decision-making on product candidate advancement and head-to-head trials of candidate vaccines.
2. Translate the recent Enterprise 2007 report recommendations into specific action plans with milestones for the next two years, including a transparent process for monitoring timelines and results.
3. Address clinical trial capacity issues.
4. Engage a broader range of community stakeholders.

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About AVAC

Founded in 1995, the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC) is a non-profit, community- and consumer-based organization that uses public education, policy analysis, advocacy and community mobilization to accelerate the ethical development and global delivery of AIDS vaccines and other HIV prevention options. To help assure its independence, AVAC does not accept funding from government or pharmaceutical industry sources. For more information, visit www.avac.org.