



Press Release

SFU's AIDS Awareness Network Collaborates with UAEM and the HIV/AIDS Legal Network to Take Action on access to HIV drugs!!

March 24 is the national **Day of Action** for Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) reform, and the AIDS Awareness Network (AAN) will be collaborating with Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM) and the Canada HIV Legal Network to host this awareness raising event. If the proposed reforms to CAMR pass, then it will mean a faster and easier process for getting affordable paediatric HIV drugs to developing countries in need. This is an incredibly important cause, an excellent opportunity for students at SFU to play a hand in really shaping the law to make a difference to communities impacted by HIV/AIDS nationally and internationally. We will be focusing on a postcard signing and media campaign to raise awareness and garner support from the MPs who are vital to getting the reform bill passed.

Look out for our many volunteers in the **Academic Quadrangle** and across campus from **10:00am until 2:00pm** on March 24 to get informed and to *have your voice heard*.

Brief Context:

Canada's Access to Medicines Regime (CAMR) is a compulsory licensing mechanism first introduced in 2004 and is part of the Government of Canada's broader strategy to assist developing and least-developed countries in obtaining lower-cost medicines for diseases that are endemic to those populations. Generic pharmaceutical companies may apply for an export-only compulsory license to manufacture a specific quantity of an on-patent drug for a limited period of two years. Only one drug has been shipped under this legislation to Rwanda. The negotiation took five years to and it became apparent to all stakeholders involved that in practice, CAMR was more restrictive than the WTO TRIPs agreement.

Bill C-393 is a proposed amendment to simplify CAMR that seeks to remove several legal, administrative and economic barriers and to include legal flexibilities outlined in the WTO TRIPs Agreement. Bill C-393 has recently passed its second reading in the Canadian House of Commons and is currently scheduled for review by the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology as early as March 2010.

For a simple overview, check out 'Dying for Drugs': <http://www.aidslaw.ca/EN/camr/index.htm>

HIV/AIDS is one of the most important issues of our time and the AAN was formed by students in the Faculty of Health Science at SFU with the belief that everyone has the responsibility and capacity to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

*For more information or to **VOLUNTEER** please contact the AAN at:*
AIDS.Awareness.Network@gmail.com