R.I.P. the Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, a Pastor Who Addressed HIV Among Black Americans

An influential religious leader, Calvin Butts III also served on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA).

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The following post on HIV.gov was written by B. Kaye Hayes, MPA, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Infectious Disease, Director, Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP), Executive Director, Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA).

It is with great sadness that we recognize the passing of the esteemed Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, a former member of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA). Dr. Butts died at home in New York City on October 28, 2022. An influential religious and community figure in New York City and beyond, Dr. Butts served as pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem for more than 30 years.

His service as a member of PACHA from 2010 to 2013 was just part of his long commitment to addressing HIV in the African American community. In 2007, he co-chaired an historic gathering of dozens of the nation's most prominent African American pastors and representatives of the National Medical Association, Congressional Black Caucus, and other organizations from across the country to map out a plan to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Black community. The meeting was convened by this Office and the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS (now known as the National Black Leadership Commission on Health), an organization he helped found and chaired.

We are grateful for Dr. Butts' leadership on HIV issues and his advocacy for equity in the response to HIV in disproportionately affected African American communities. He will be remembered as a powerful voice working to reduce HIV-related stigma and mobilizing his own and other faith communities to engage in the HIV response in new ways.

My colleagues and I offer our heartfelt condolences to Dr. Butts' family, friends, and colleagues.

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