



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Civil Disobedience at UN to Fight AIDS

BRAD HOYLMAN September 18, 2013



On September 17, the opening day of a UN General Assembly meeting focused on poverty and public health, I joined executive directors of leading HIV/AIDS organizations, people living with HIV (PLHIV) and their advocates in an act of civil disobedience to draw attention to the millions who lack access to lifesaving treatment because wealthy countries are cutting back on funding.

We brought traffic in front of the UN to a halt and demanded that President Obama and other world leaders back a financial transaction tax, also known as a “[Robin Hood Tax](#),” to generate revenue that could fund universal access to HIV treatment, care and prevention, as

well as other urgent priorities such as climate change, healthcare, higher education and public transit needs.

There is so much good this small financial transaction tax could achieve, particularly in the fight against the AIDS epidemic, which continues to rage around the world and here at home.

Every day in our state, approximately 11 people are newly diagnosed with HIV and 5 people die from the disease. In New York City, in 2010, nearly 1,700 people died from AIDS-related causes. Frighteningly, City Department of Health surveillance data show the number of HIV diagnoses among persons aged 13-29 has been increasing steadily in recent years.