

**Key PEPFAR official resigns.** By Andrew Green, Devex, 23 April 2026

The word of the week in the global HIV community is “**results.**”

As in, the result of the [U.S. State Department](#) tying future health funding to U.S. access to mineral rights (as appears to be the case in Zambia) or other commercial interests is the **resignation in protest of a top official** from the [President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief](#), or PEPFAR.

Mike **Reid**, PEPFAR’s chief science officer, announced Monday in [his newsletter](#) that he was stepping down, **citing the transactional nature of the new bilateral health financing deals** the State Department has struck over the past six months. He also pointed to an inability to reconcile “press[ing] partner governments to absorb hundreds of millions of dollars in health costs, while ... direct[ing] vastly greater sums toward military actions that result in civilian harm.”

Reid, who was appointed to the job in 2022, said he remained in the role after Trump took office and began cutting HIV programs and dismantling the [U.S. Agency for International Development](#) **to help prevent further damage.**

**Chris Beyrer**, who directs the [Duke Global Health Institute](#) and sits on PEPFAR’s scientific advisory board, tells me Reid succeeded in this goal: “He played a really important role as someone who stayed on through the transition and continued to engage the scientific and public health communities. He certainly gave those of us who really care about these programs and do work on HIV in PEPFAR countries confidence that **there were still very credible, very real scientific leaders at the table.**”

Beyrer says it will be “hard to make up for that loss.”

The administration has not publicly responded to Reid’s announcement or named a replacement for the role, which involves overseeing PEPFAR’s

scientific strategy and guiding the interventions the program invests in. But observers say the fact that he is now stepping down **has certainly sent a message.**

**Emily Bass**, a journalist and expert on PEPFAR, wrote in [her newsletter](#) this week that Reid's departure signals "a growing crisis of confidence in the America First Global Health Strategy that the State Department is aware of, and seeking to mitigate." Mitigation, she wrote, is taking the form of a more active defense of their efforts **and the release of funds for PEPFAR to continue its work.**