Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today across the globe, people are marking World AIDS Day. It's an opportunity to reflect upon the progress we've made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, this pandemic, and to re dedicate ourselves to ending the spread of the virus.

World AIDS Day is an occasion to remember friends, family members, loved ones, and millions of others lost to the disease. It is a solemn reminder of those still living with HIV/AIDS, whether in the cities of the United States, or the villages of Africa, Asia, or elsewhere. It is a reminder of the need to continue the fight to keep investing in research and medical advances, to stay focused on new treatments, care, prevention, and early intervention—a key element of quality of life; to expand housing opportunities to people with HIV/AIDS and end discrimination.

Yet it's also a reminder of how far we've traveled since the first World AIDS Day, 30 years ago, when AIDS diagnosis, which we acknowledged recently on the 30-year anniversary of the first AIDS diagnosis.

In my hometown of San Francisco, we learned early on of the terrible toll HIV/AIDS took along the way. It could take on a community.

But that knowledge, as sad as it was, drove us to action, advocacy, and progress. Because we had suffered so much, we could also become a model for the world. We worked with our community-based solutions in regard to prevention, to care, and to research for a cure or vaccine.

This is something I'm very proud of, and really it found its way into legislation; the Ryan White Care Act; housing opportunities for people with HIV/AIDS; increased funding for NIH research; expanded investments in prevention, care, treatment; and an end to the ban on Federal funds for syringe exchange. Something very important if you're going to prevent AIDS.

Beyond our borders, we have extended care to millions in the developing world. Early on in our community, when we would have an AIDS mobilization day, right almost from the start—and Congresswoman Woolsey can attest to this—we understood if you're going to meet the challenge of HIV/AIDS at home, you have to have a mobilization that is global because AIDS knew no borders, but it had to be global.

So we would have these vigils of thousands of people walking in a great solemn way to talk about ending AIDS globally almost right from the start, although we were feeling it very personally, very locally in our community. Beyond our borders—that's why we extended care to millions in the developing world. We increased resources for PEPFAR and the Global Fund. And I commend President Bush for his leadership on PEPFAR and the commitment that he made there.

I congratulate President Obama for the statement that he made this morning which increased funding for the Ryan White Care Initiative that supports care provided by HIV medical clinics across the country and also added funding for the drug program initiative for people with HIV/AIDS, and has set a new target of helping 6 million people around the world get treatment by the end of 2013. It's very important.

I commend Secretary Clinton for her strong leadership and her statement about ridding AIDS, especially among children, as soon as possible.

The challenges that we have faced over the years, some have disappeared. When I first came to Congress, I was sworn in in a special election, and they told me you're not allowed to speak. You just raise your hand and say, "Yes, I support and defend the Constitution."

But then the Speaker, Speaker Wright, said, "Would the gentlelady from California wish to address the House?" I had been told not to address the floor, and if I did, I had to be very brief. So I stood up and acknowledged my father, Thomas D'Alesandro, had served as a Member of Congress, so he was on the floor of the Congress, and my family, and I thanked them all and constituents. My family said, "I came here to fight against HIV and AIDS." And that was about it.

Well, my colleagues who had told me to be brief then said, "Why would you even mention that? This was 24 years ago, why would you even mention that?" The first thing that you want to say to the Members of Congress when you get here is you're here to fight HIV/AIDS? Why did you say such a thing?

I said, "Well, I said such a thing because that's why I came here."

But I never would have thought 24 years ago that we would project—really into another generation now—that we would not have a cure for HIV/AIDS. Never would you even mention that? The first thing that you want to say to the Members of Congress when you get here is what you're here to fight HIV/AIDS? Why did you say such a thing?

I said, "Well, I said such a thing because that's why I came here."

But we never would have thought 24 years ago that we would project—really into another generation now—that we would not have a cure for HIV/AIDS. Never would you even mention that? The first thing that you want to say to the Members of Congress when you get here is what you're here to fight HIV/AIDS? Why did you say such a thing?