



POSITION: ADMINISTRATOR, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

NOMINEE: Dr. Margaret A. Hamburg

BIRTH DATE: 1955

EDUCATION: She earned her M.D. from Harvard Medical School, and completed her training at the New York Hospital/Cornell University Medical Center.

FAMILY: Husband: Peter Fitzhugh Brown; two children

Clinton White House: “In 1993, Dr. Hamburg was President Clinton's first choice for the newly created post of federal AIDS coordinator. Pregnant with her first child at that time, Hamburg declined, putting motherhood first. President Clinton selected her in 1997 to be assistant secretary for policy and evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This time she accepted.”

[\[Source\]](#)

EXPERIENCE: 1986 - 1988, U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; 1989 – 1990, assistant director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at NIH, where her work focused on AIDS research. 1990-1997, became deputy health commissioner of New York City and was named health commissioner a year later. She created an aggressive tuberculosis control program and the country's first public health bioterrorism defense program; 1997-2001, assistant secretary for planning and evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services in the Clinton administration, where she created a bioterrorism program; 2001 – Present, vice president for biological programs at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a think tank focused on the threat to public safety from nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

On Abortion

“Dr. Margaret Hamburg, whose department runs abortion counseling and family-planning centers, and says that Giuliani's transition team ‘would never have considered anyone who wasn't pro-choice.’ Hamburg was one of only three commissioners initially appointed by Giuliani's predecessor, David Dinkins, who was retained in the new administration. She served three years under Giuliani before taking an assistant secretary post in Bill Clinton's Health and Human Services agency. Hamburg says her pro-choice preferences were a given in the Giuliani administration, and that ‘the subject of abortion never came up’ during or after the selection process. ‘The only question Giuliani asked me in my interview was whether I believed in the legalization of drugs,’ Hamburg says. ‘He was comfortable with our high-risk pregnancy and pregnancy-prevention programs, though he didn't engage much. There were no restrictions on abortion counseling. This was not an area where there was any signal of a policy change between Dinkins and Giuliani.’” [\[Source\]](#)

On Abstinence Programs

“While serving as New York City health commissioner, Hamburg opposed a "morality oath" put forth by the Board of Education in 1992 when New York City was considering abstinence-only sex education. She also said that science-based public health strategies and not "moral judgment" or "wishful thinking" should be the foundation for HIV/AIDS education aimed at young people.”

[\[Source\]](#)

On Tuberculosis

“While commissioner Dr. Hamburg's innovative treatment plan for tuberculosis (TB) became a model for health departments around the world. In the 1990s, TB was the leading infectious killer of youths and adults and had become resistant to standard drugs. To be effective, new drugs required patients to take pills every day for up to two years, but failure to complete the full course of treatment allowed the bacteria to mutate into drug-resistant strains. Hamburg sent healthcare workers to patients' homes to help manage their drug regimen, and between 1992 and 1997, the TB rate for New York City fell by 46 percent, and by 86 percent for the most resistant strains.” [\[Source\]](#)

On Taxpayer Funded Needle Distribution Programs

“Hamburg (as New York City health commissioner) gained praise for a needle-exchange program for injection drug users that aimed to curb the spread of HIV.”
[\[Source\]](#)

Reaction from Pro-Abortion Groups

“As New York City Health Commissioner, Dr. Hamburg instituted a needle-exchange program to help prevent the spread of HIV, oversaw abortion counseling and family planning centers and pregnancy prevention programs. Like Dr. Hamburg, Dr. Sharfstein (nominee for Deputy at FDA) demonstrated pro-choice credentials throughout his career” NARAL Pro-Choice New York press release [\[Source\]](#)

New York City Abortion Statistics

“In most of the United States, 24 abortions are carried out for every 100 live births. In New York, 72 abortions occur for every 100 live births. The continuing boom in abortions—90,157 were performed in the city in 2006, the last year for which statistics are available—apparently means that many women are using abortion as their birth control method of choice. That concerns health advocates, who point out that the procedure sometimes causes complications and is more expensive than contraception. The high rate also shows that these women are not protected against AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases . . . 93% of the abortions in New York City are performed on city residents. . . An average of 250 abortions are performed in the city each day at more than 200 clinics and doctor's offices . . . even though free or low-cost contraception is offered through 59 publicly funded programs at 218 sites in New York state, mostly in New York City. . . . In a time of fiscal constraints, abortion is costing the state at least \$16 million in Medicaid spending annually, and city taxpayers still more through a city Health and Hospitals Corp. policy that provides free abortions to poor women at its facilities. The surgical costs alone are between \$1,000 and \$1,800 per abortion . . . But the biggest concern over the high abortion rate is the impact it is having on women's health. . . . the high abortion figures are a sign that women in the city are putting themselves at risk of catching AIDS or other diseases. . . That seems to be particularly true for New York City's African-American women. Though blacks make up about 24% of the city's population, black women were responsible for 45% of the abortions in the city in 2006. That mirrors a national trend, according to the Guttmacher Institute, which tracks abortion numbers and found that the rate among black women is twice the national average.”

[\[Source\]](#)