



AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition

SAVE_ADAP Working Group

January 23, 2007

Senator Robert Byrd
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Representative David Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Byrd and Obey:

The following organizations urge you to support an increase of \$232.9 million for FY 08 — the true-need number — for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) for Fiscal Year 2008. Flat funding ADAP for an entire year is totally unacceptable and will result in a growing HIV/AIDS treatment crisis here in our own country.

We recognize that access to primary care and support services are a vital component to comprehensive care and we urge you to also support the highest funding possible for the entire Ryan White CARE Act. But the ADAP program is severely under funded and needs increased funding in FY07 to avert further crises. We ask you to support an increase of \$232.9 million to ADAP in the FY08.

ADAP, funded under Title II of the Ryan White CARE Act, provides lifesaving medications for low-income people living with HIV/AIDS who are uninsured or lack adequate prescription drug coverage. It is the last hope for people who have no other place to turn. It is the final safety net for Americans who have no other means of accessing HIV medications and provides a lifeline for over 136,000 people. ADAP clients are predominately very poor and are often from a minority community, with 80 percent below 200 percent of the poverty level.

The Administration has strongly encouraged that all Americans learn their HIV status and, with the advent of rapid HIV tests, the numbers of people being tested are growing. The fact that people are living longer, combined with the more than 40,000 new infections diagnosed each year, means the number of people depending on ADAP continues to grow. Most of these new HIV cases are people who are disproportionately uninsured and low-income. They need these safety net programs to access life-saving treatment that will keep them healthy and productive.

For some time, however, many state ADAPs have been facing financial difficulties and are unable to meet the needs of those who depend on the program. After receiving funding increases for a number of years to keep up with the growing demand, this past year ADAPs received only a \$2.2 million increase. According to the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), **as of November 15, 2006, a total of 340 individuals were on waiting lists in three states.** In addition, four ADAPs have implemented other cost-containment measures in the eight months since the 2006 ADAP fiscal year began. Five ADAPs anticipate the need to implement new or additional cost-containment measures during the ADAP fiscal year, which ends March 31, 2007.

In South Carolina, many people remain on a waiting list. Sadly, a few have died since South Carolina implemented its wait list. This state's ADAP crisis was recently profiled in the Dec. 29, 2006 *New York Times* article "Waiting List for AIDS Drugs Causes Dismay in South Carolina." At



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that time, state officials said it would cost South Carolina \$3 million to clear the waiting list. Alaska has 13 people on its waiting list. The number of states with waiting lists fluctuates.

Again, we urge you to support the highest funding possible for the entire Ryan White CARE Act. The ADAP program is severely under-funded and needs increased funding in FY08 to avert further crises. We therefore ask that you support an increase of \$232.9 million, the true-need number, to the ADAP program in the FY08..

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC) SAVE_ADAP working group

AIDS/HIV Services Group, Charlottesville VA
AIDS Network, Madison, WI
AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin
AIDS Treatment Data Network, New York, NY
American Medical Student Association, Reston, VA
Camp Heartland, Milwaukee, WI
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project/CHAMP, New York, NY
HIV/AIDS Services for African Americans in Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska
HIVCare, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, San Francisco CA
HIVictorious, Inc., Madison, WI
Housing Works, Inc. Brooklyn, NY
Hudson Pride Connections, Jersey City, NJ
International Foundation for Alternative Research in AIDS, Portland, OR
New Mexico POZ Coalition, Albuquerque, NM
Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services, Columbia, SC
Partnership Project, Portland, OR
Project Inform, San Francisco, CA
RAIN Oklahoma (Regional AIDS Intercommunity Network), Oklahoma City, OK
South Carolina Progressive Network, Columbia, SC
South Carolina Campaign to End AIDS (SC-C2EA)
Test Positive Aware Network, Chicago, IL
The Access Project, US
The Advocacy Project, Houston, Texas
The AIDS Institute, Washington, DC
The Center for AIDS Information & Advocacy, Houston, Tx
Umatilla Morrow Alternatives, Irrigon, Oregon

cc: Senator Tom Harkin

Senator Arlen Specter

Representative Nancy Pelosi

Representative James Walsh