

November 12, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: HIV/AIDS Housing Community Urges Congress to Robustly Fund the HOPWA Program and Modernize the Funding Distribution Formula

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Lowey:

We, the undersigned providers of HIV/AIDS housing and services, are writing you to reiterate our support for robust funding of the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program and a modernization of the HOPWA formula. We believe that our request will bring our nation one step forward towards an AIDS-free generation.

As you know, the HOPWA program, authorized in 1990 through the Cranston-Gonzalez-National Affordable Housing Act, was designed to respond to the unique and varied housing needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Stable housing is one of the greatest unmet needs for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families. HOPWA prevents homelessness by providing short-term and permanent housing, creates access to life-saving medical care and support services, and promotes adherence to treatments among patients, and as such is a powerful tool for prevention of the spread of the virus. Moreover, HOPWA is one of HUD's most efficient and cost-effective programs, with 95% of clients obtaining housing plans in the 2014-2015 program year, 11,577 newly placed in housing including 2,106 who were formerly homeless, 95% having contact with a healthcare provider, and 94% accessing and maintaining health insurance.

There is universal agreement that HOPWA program funds, like the Ryan White program, the only other formula-based HIV/AIDS program, should no longer be based on the number of *cumulative* AIDS cases since the epidemic began, including those who have died, but on the number of **living HIV and AIDS cases** in a given jurisdiction. Such distribution would better reflect the nature of the HIV epidemic that has evolved over the years through advances in HIV

care and surveillance, and the increasingly disproportionate impact of HIV on communities of poverty.

We are pleased that the Senate recognizes the need to modernize the formula used to distribute HOPWA funds so that they are no longer based on cumulative AIDS cases but rather a combination of HIV cases, rental costs, and poverty levels. **In the final Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we strongly urge Congress to include robust funding for the HOPWA program and a modernization of the formula for grant awards.** We support a formula update that includes both a Fair Market Rent factor *and* a poverty factor, as included in the budget request. We also request that the Committee include a stop-loss provision that ensures that no jurisdiction loses more than five percent of its FY 2015 allocation or gains more than ten percent of its FY 2015 allocation. We believe that the Committee should include this stop-loss provision in its FY 2016 bill and in the appropriations bills for each of the next four fiscal years. The Ryan White program formula was updated in 1996 and 2006, and it is high time that the HOPWA formula better reflect the current epidemic

Again, thank you for your long-standing support and continued leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We look forward to working with you and the entire Congress as you successfully complete the FY2016 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

National AIDS Housing Coalition, Washington, DC
Acadiana CARES, Lafayette, LA
ACRIA, New York, NY
African Services Committee, New York, NY
AIDS Action Baltimore, Baltimore, MD
AIDS Alabama South, Mobile, AL
AIDS Alabama, AL
AIDS Arms, Inc., Dallas, TX
AIDS Care Ocean State, Providence, RI
AIDS Connecticut (ACT), Hartford, CT
AIDS Project Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA
AIDS Project New Haven, New Haven, CT
AIDS Resource Center Ohio, Dayton, OH
AIDS Services Coalition, Hattiesburg, MS
AIDS Services of Dallas, Dallas, TX
AIDS United, Washington, DC
Alamo Area Resource Center, San Antonio, TX
Aletheia House, Birmingham, NY
American Sexual Health Association, Durham, NC
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, Akron, OH

Bailey House, Inc., New York, NY
BASIC NWFL, Inc., Panama City, FL
Birmingham AIDS Outreach, Birmingham, AL
BOOM!Health, Bronx, NY
CAEAR Coalition, Washington, DC
CALOR, Chicago, IL
CARE, Inc., Jessup, GA
CARES, Inc., Albany, NY
Careteam+, Myrtle Beach, SC
Caritas House, Inc., Morgantown, WVA
Carolinas CARE Partnership, Charlotte, NC
Casa De Hope, San Antonio, Texas
Cascade AIDS Project, Portland, OR
Center for Women Policy Studies, Chevy Chase, MD
Chicago House and Social Service Agency, Chicago IL.
Christie's Place, San Diego, CA
City of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT
City of St. Louis, Department of Health, Bureau of
Communicable Disease Control, St. Louis, Missouri
Clare Housing, Minneapolis, MN

Collaborative Solutions, Inc., Birmingham, AL
 Columbus House Inc., New Haven, CT
 Community Access National Network (CANN),
 Washington, DC
 Connecticut HIV Planning Consortium, Hamden, CT
 Cure For AIDS Coalition, Las Vegas, NV
 Doorways, St. Louis, MO
 Eden I&R, Inc., Hayward, CA
 Frannie Peabody Center, Portland, ME
 G III Associates, Washington, DC
 Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), New York, NY
 Global Justice Institute - New York, NY
 Grace Episcopal Church, Birmingham, AL
 Greater Hartford Ryan White Planning Council,
 Windsor, CT
 H.O.P.E. Atlanta - Programs of Travelers Aid, Atlanta, GA
 Hartford HIV/AIDS Commission, Hartford, CT
 HealthHIV, Washington, DC.
 HIV Prevention Justice Alliance, Chicago, IL
 HIV/HCV Resource Center, Lebanon, NH
 Housing Works, Brooklyn, NY
 Human Resources Wellness Center of New Britain,
 New Britain, CT
 ImmaCare, Inc., Hartford, CT
 Independence Northwest, Naugatuck CT
 JASMYN, Inc., Jacksonville, FL
 Jefferson County HIV/AIDS Community Coalition,
 Birmingham, Alabama
 JRI, Jamaica Plain, MA
 Kingsport Housing and Redevelopment Authority,
 Kingsport, TN
 LA County Department of Health Services,
 Los Angeles, CA
 Latino Commission on AIDS, New York, NY
 Legacy Community Health, Houston, TX
 Life Foundation, Honolulu, HI
 Los Angeles LGBT Center, Los Angeles, CA
 Medical AIDS Outreach of Alabama, Inc.,
 Montgomery, AL
 Metropolitan Community Churches, Sarasota, FL
 Minnesota AIDS Project, Minneapolis, MN
 Mississippi Center for Justice, Jackson, MS
 Moveable Feast, Baltimore, MD
 My Brother's Keeper, Inc., Jackson, MS
 Nashville CARES, Nashville, TN
 National Association of County and City Health Officials,
 Washington, DC
 National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC), Washington, DC
 National Coalition for LGBT Health/Health HIV,
 Washington, DC
 National Latino AIDS Action Network (NLAAN),
 Washington, DC
 NEAL Together, Gadsden, Alabama
 New Jersey Association on Correction, Trenton, NJ
 New Opportunities, Torrington, CT
 NMAC, Washington, DC
 NO/AIDS Task Force (d.b.a. CrescentCare),
 New Orleans, LA
 North Carolina AIDS Action Network, Raleigh, NC
 One Roof, Inc., Birmingham, AL
 Open Aid Alliance, Missoula, MT
 Pacientes de SIDA pro Política Sana, San Juan, PR
 Perception Programs, Inc., Willimantic, CT
 Positive Champions, Ormond Beach, FL
 Pozitively Healthy Coalition, Washington, DC
 Project Inform, San Francisco, CA
 RAIN, Charlotte, NC
 Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County,
 Concord, CA
 Rural AIDS Action Network, St. Cloud, MN
 Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition, Arlington, VA
 Selma AIR, Selma, AL
 Shanti, San Francisco, CA 94109
 Shelter Resources, Inc. d.b.a. Belle Reve New Orleans,
 New Orleans, LA
 Siouxland Community Health Center, Sioux City, IA
 SisterLove, Inc., Atlanta, GA
 South Carolina HIV/AIDS Council, Columbia, SC
 Southern AIDS Coalition, Birmingham, AL
 Southern HIV/AIDS Strategy Initiative (SASI), Duke
 University, Durham, NC
 Tabor House, Inc., Hartford, CT
 TACTS - Association of Clinical Trial Services, Chicago, IL
 The 1917 Outpatient, Research and Dental Clinic ,
 University of AL, Birmingham, AL
 The ACCESS Network, Ridgeland, SC
 The Afiya Center, Dallas, TX
 The AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Chicago, IL
 The Firehouse Shelter, Birmingham, AL
 The Living Room, Atlanta, GA
 The Women's Collective, Washington, DC
 Thrive Alabama, Huntsville, AL
 Transgender Law Center, Oakland, CA
 United Way of LI, Deer Park, NY
 Unity Wellness Center, Opelika, AL
 Vermont CARES, Burlington, VT

Volunteers o America, Greater Baton Rouge,
Baton Rouge, LA
Wateree AIDS Task Force, Sumter, SC
West Alabama AIDS Outreach, Tuscaloosa, AL
Women's Development Center, Law Vegas, NV

cc: Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD
and Related Agencies

Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,
HUD and Related Agencies

Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD
and Related Agencies

Honorable David Price, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,
HUD and Related Agencies.