

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

As you consider the next legislative package in response to COVID-19, we urge you to include supplemental appropriations to ensure HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention and housing programs are able adequately respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, while continuing to provide life-saving services to people living with and at risk of HIV and AIDS.

We thank you for including \$90 million for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and \$65 million for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. This funding is working now to provide services, including telehealth, medication, housing, food, and emergency support services for people living with HIV nationwide.

In the next COVID-19 response, we urge Congress to include supplemental funding for the following programs:

**\$500 million in addition funding for HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program**

Ryan White Program providers and community-based organizations are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, and they need additional funding to meet the pressing current needs of their patients and clients. Ryan White Program clients are both vulnerable to the dangers of COVID-19 infection given their HIV status as well as low income, so the dangers of COVID-19 impact every aspect of their lives. Ryan White clinics nationwide have shifted care to telehealth to protect patients during the pandemic, but providing access to phones with sufficient minutes for patients and telehealth equipment for providers and clinics has been an immediate cost that clinics must support. Additionally, clinics are providing significantly more case management services and support to an increasing number of patients who are experiencing increased or new impoverishment from the dramatic economic downturn over the last few weeks. Ryan White programs are covering new costs, including medications (prescription and over-the-counter), behavioral health services, and access to basic necessities, such as food and shelter that is appropriate during COVID-19. Finally, as infectious diseases experts, Ryan White program teams are on the frontlines of both the HIV and COVID-19 pandemics, often doing multiple jobs at once now, and they need safety protection, including PPE and mental health support, as well as the security that their team will continue to be employed during this dramatic economic disruption. Changes in program income based on the move to serving patients via telehealth, the loss of insurance coverage, and other budget cuts in the wake of COVID-19 make the need for federal resources more critical than ever. Additional funding across the program's parts to help people living with HIV stay in care and

on treatment; maintain access to care and treatment during the economic downturn; meet the new needs of people who now are without health insurance; and prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19. Without this additional support, the Ryan White Program will fail to meet the immediate needs of its patients and clients while losing ground on responding effectively to COVID-19 and HIV.

### **\$100 million in additional funding to CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention**

As HIV prevention and surveillance staff are shifted to work on the COVID-19 response, it is important the infrastructure of HIV prevention is not impacted. HIV prevention programs at state and local health departments and CBOs are in immediate need of additional funds to continue to provide HIV prevention services that are critical to reach the goals of the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative. HIV prevention programs at state and local health departments and community-based organizations have been forced to reduce and/or suspend core HIV prevention activities, redirect personnel to COVID-19 response, reduce and/or suspend HIV testing, suspend pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) initiations, and transition to telehealth services. Without additional funding, there could be an increase in new HIV infections because people will not be able to be tested or linked to comprehensive HIV care.

### **\$65 million for HUD's Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Program**

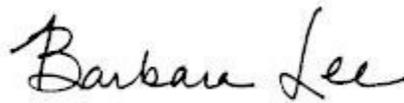
HOPWA is already seeing increases in demand for housing services during this pandemic. Demand for supportive housing and rental assistance will increase as the economic impacts of COVID-19 are felt. Social-distancing and quarantines are impossible if a person living with HIV does not have housing, and we must ensure HOPWA is able to provide this housing for the safety of the HOPWA client and their family.

### **\$58 million for CDC's Infectious Disease and Opioid Program**

Supporting syringe service programs via CDC's infectious diseases and opioid programs line and removing the ban on using federal funding for syringes and other related supplies is necessary at this time to respond to the intersecting epidemics of COVID-19 and drug overdose. The COVID-19 pandemic already has resulted in increased drug overdoses, homelessness, and unemployment. Syringe Services Programs (SSPs) are one of the most effective ways to prevent drug overdose as well as engage and serve individuals who use drugs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Clients trust SSPs as care providers and sources of information and have been reaching out for help and support during this crisis as they have been experiencing greater needs - including need for shelter, food, healthcare, and access to medication assisted treatment - as a result of new or increased levels of impoverishment from the dramatic economic downturn. There also has been an urgent need for greater access to naloxone, especially since physical distancing has created social isolation that has increased overdose risk and incidents.

Thank you for your tireless leadership in our nation's response to COVID-19, as well as your continuous leadership fighting for people living with and at risk of HIV across the country.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee

**HIV / AIDS Supplemental Funding Letter  
List of Signatories  
May 11, 2020**

1. Barbara Lee
2. Earl Blumenauer
3. Lisa Blunt Rochester
4. David N. Cicilline
5. Steve Cohen
6. Danny K. Davis
7. Peter A. DeFazio
8. Ted Deutch
9. Adriano Espaillat
10. Marcia L. Fudge
11. Deb Haaland
12. Alcee L. Hastings
13. Jahana Hayes
14. Sheila Jackson Lee
15. Eddie Bernice Johnson
16. Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
17. Joseph P. Kennedy, III
18. Ann Kirkpatrick
19. Al Lawson
20. Stephen F. Lynch
21. Carolyn B. Maloney
22. Lucy McBath
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24. Gwen Moore
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