

We Support Full Implementation of the Affordable Care Act to Improve Health Care for People Living with HIV/AIDS

The following organizations support the complete realization of Medicaid expansion, provided for by the Affordable Care Act, to increase health care access for thousands of individuals living with HIV/AIDS, as well as to deliver significant cost-saving opportunities to states and substantial benefits to public health.

BACKGROUND

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed into law by President Obama in March 2010, enacting the most far reaching health care legislation since the creation of the Medicare and Medicaid programs in the 1960s. The health care reform legislation will impact millions of Americans and eliminate several primary ways the current healthcare system fails people living with HIV/AIDS. Namely, the law eliminates the disability requirement for Medicaid eligibility and sets the program's qualifying income standard at 133% of the federal poverty level. By removing the disability test as a Medicaid condition, the program's expansion will add 16 million more Americans to the program and provide access to comprehensive health care for thousands of HIV-positive individuals who currently do not receive stable care.

In March 2012, the United States Supreme Court will hear challenges to the Affordable Care Act, including those brought by states seeking to reject Medicaid expansion in 2014. The Court will consider the constitutionality of the expansion separate from its assessment of the ACA's effort to insure all Americans through the minimum coverage requirement, also known as the "individual mandate." The undersigned organizations endorse the National Minority AIDS Council's amicus brief supporting the Medicaid expansion in its challenge before the Supreme Court.

FRIEND-OF-THE-COURT BRIEF

The National Minority AIDS Council, in collaboration with Morrison & Foerster LLP, proudly submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in *State of Florida, et al. v. Department of Health and Human Services, et al.* (No. 11-400). The brief, with the support of four national HIV/AIDS advocacy organizations, argues that Medicaid expansion provides an indispensable contribution to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Specifically, the brief underscores how Medicaid's current disability requirement impedes access to treatment, the program's expansion is extremely cost effective, increased access to treatment reduces transmission risk, and expansion alleviates financial burden on States while ensuring low-income HIV-positive individuals have sustainable access to care. The brief also highlights how providing access to care, including counseling and screening services for millions of low-income Americans who currently lack such care, will help to prevent new HIV infections among the nation's most vulnerable population.

Through its focus on the critical impact that the Medicaid expansion will have on the fight against HIV/AIDS, the brief highlights the ways in which the Affordable Care Act addresses the nation's broken health care system.. The undersigned organizations stand with NMAC in support of expanding critical access to treatment and care for those living with HIV/AIDS, who are regularly excluded from the private insurance market and left with unmet health care needs by the existing patchwork of federal and state programs.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

A Brave New Day (Jackson, MS)
AIDS Action Baltimore
AIDS Alabama
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families
AIDS Community Research Initiative of America (New York)
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
AIDS Resource Center Ohio
Alliance for a Just Society
Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center
AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
Communities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief (CAEAR) Coalition
Community Access National Network (CANN)
Community Organizations in Action
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
Disability Policy Consortium
Emmaus Services for the Aging
Harlem United Community AIDS Center
HIV Law Project (New York)
Hyacinth AIDS Foundation (New Jersey)
International Association of Physicians in AIDS Care
Lifelong AIDS Alliance
Main Street Alliance
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of People with AIDS
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latino AIDS Action Network (NLAAN)
NO/AIDS Task Force
North American Management (Alexandria, VA)
North Carolina AIDS Action Network (NCAAN)
Northern Colorado AIDS Project
Ohio AIDS Coalition
PFLAG National
(Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
Project Inform
Raising Women's Voices for the Health We Need
SIECUS, Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S.
START at Westminster (Washington, DC)
Summit Health Institute for Research and Education
The AIDS Institute
The American Academy of HIV Medicine
Treatment Access Group (TAG)
Women Together for Change