

Summary of HIV/STD Action Day Legislative Asks

Together, we have made massive gains in the fight against HIV. Our communities and families we have shown the incredible strength of our community in finding the will, compassion, determination and innovation to tackle one of the largest health epidemics in our modern history. Through our collaborative efforts, we have made it possible for this once fatal disease to transition to a chronic condition for many individuals. We have reached this place due to our investments and partnerships to support sound policy, adequate resources, and strong leadership to change the course of the epidemic. Our new and improved medications; expanded health coverage options; and an updated understanding of the relationship between treatment, care, and prevention have created a new paradigm for the HIV epidemic in the United States—and the promise of ending new infections. **We stand at a great moment to continue the path that leads on ever closer to the end of the epidemic by asking our federal elected officials to:**



1. Restore Funding for the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative (MAI)

Established by congress in 1999, the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative (MAI) has retained its commitment to supporting the goals of building capacity among minority community-based organizations, enhancing cultural competency in service delivery, and increasing access to care for minority populations.

On HIV/STD Action Day, we ask Congress to:

- *Support for the HHS Secretary's MAI Fund by providing approximately \$55 million in FY18 to "promote innovation, address critical emerging issues, and have established new collaborations across Federal agencies."*¹
- *Support the SAMSHA MAI by storing the 17 million in FY18 to support HIV-related substance use and mental health outcomes for racial and ethnic minorities.*



2. Lift the Budget Caps

The Budget Control Act of 2011 subjects millions of Americans to suffering because of arbitrary and senseless spending cuts that limit resources available for public health research, prevention and treatment programs the HIV community relies on. On HIV/STD Action Day, we ask Congress to:

- *Lift the budget caps to invest in America's most critical services including vital HIV services and programs.*

If the budget caps are not lifted, we will hamper efforts to end this epidemic and undo years of previous investments. Government spending in public health is at its lowest level since the Eisenhower Administration. Lifting the budget caps will create more than a million jobs, grow our economy, as well as keep us safe and secure as a nation.



3. Maintain Funding the HIV Domestic portfolio

Health care access across the HIV Care Continuum is critical to increasing the number of people living with HIV who are retained in care, decreasing the future costs to the healthcare system as well as preventing future transmissions of HIV. On HIV/STD Action Day, we ask Congress to:

which leads to the current trends of improving health and reducing new HIV infections from 2008 to 2014 by 18 percent. The prevention of 33,200 cases over these six years resulted in an estimated cost savings in lifetime medical care totaling \$14.9 billion.

- *Continue investing in the Ryan White Program that has seen 86% of its clients achieve viral suppression. Individuals that are virally suppressed do not transmit HIV and have much better health outcomes which saves the system money.*
- *Continue investing in HIV prevention*

- *Defend consumer protections in private insurance, such as mandated benefits and no health status underwriting.*
- *Substantially increase funding by at least \$100 million for HIV/AIDS research at NIH to ensure that important HIV/AIDS research progress is not paused.*

Through investments in HIV prevention, hundreds of thousands of new infections have been averted and billions of dollars in treatment costs have been avoided.



4. Maintain Funding for the STD Prevention Portfolio

STD programs are essential to improving the health of our communities as well as reducing the risk of HIV infection. On HIV/STD Action Day, we ask Congress to:

- *Provide the CDC's Division of STD Prevention a total of \$192.3 million in FY2018, an increase of \$35 million over FY2016.*

We are currently at a 20 year high for STDs infection. The proposed cuts to STD prevention would cause the 30,000 people who have contracted with STDs would not know they are infected, would not be treated, and would likely spread STDs in their communities. The 10-year cost of a sustained 17 percent cut to federal STD prevention is approximately \$500 million dollars— costing two times more than the value of the budget cut.



5. Increase Funding for Housing

Housing is the greatest unmet need for people living with HIV. The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program, provides housing assistance and related supportive services for low-income people living with HIV and their families. On HIV/STD Action Day, we ask Congress to:

- *Fund HOPWA by additional \$50 million in FY18 over the current funding level of \$335 million.*

This increase would provide the \$21 million needed to keep the more than 3,000 households from homelessness across all jurisdictions following last year's change to the formula distribution. It would also create and fund a separate HOPWA technical assistance program as well as HOPWA competitive grants to facilitate innovation at this critical time.

To end the HIV epidemic and realize future cost savings, an increased investment in today is needed now more than ever. Presently, over 1.2 million people in the United States live with HIV. These individuals—our sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, and friends—are in every congressional district, State, and territory. But HIV is more than a personal or family issue. It is a national public health issue, and as such, the federal government plays a significant role in leading our nation's response to the epidemic. The critical investment of the federal government in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment has been rewarded with significant medical returns and cost savings. Due to federal investment in HIV prevention, fewer individuals are being diagnosed with HIV each year. Recent research has demonstrated that if an individual living with HIV is on antiretroviral treatment, their HIV can be suppressed to such a level that the possibility of transmitting the virus is almost non-existent. Federal investment in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment provides individuals living with HIV the opportunity to live full lives—participating socially and economically in America.



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