

February 13, 2025

Dear Member of Congress:

Welcome, and congratulations on the start of the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress! On behalf of the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP), we are writing to share the issues and public policies that remain critical to our efforts to end the HIV epidemic. FAPP is a national coalition of local, regional, and national organizations advocating for federal legislation and policy seeking to end the HIV epidemic in the United States.

Over the last five decades, the United States has made significant progress in responding to the HIV epidemic. Treatment and biomedical prevention advances – and the innovative research and development behind them – have revolutionized our ability to treat and prevent HIV and have provided lifesaving interventions to millions of people worldwide.

Strong bipartisan support and leadership in addressing the HIV public health crisis have resulted in essential investments that represent some of our country's most significant health care achievements. We have also made great progress thanks to the Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. initiative (EHE), announced during President Trump's 2019 State of the Union Address.

HIV prevention and treatment save money. Numerous studies on HIV prevention and treatment interventions demonstrate that we can save lives and money via HIV prevention tools, including condoms, HIV treatment as prevention, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and accessible and affordable health care services. Most of these interventions can be accomplished for a fraction of the cost of HIV treatment.

The return on federal investments in HIV prevention and treatment benefits our national economy. Each new HIV diagnosis has a lifetime treatment cost of over \$500,000. In 2022, an estimated 31,800 new HIV transmissions occurred in the U.S. resulting in lifetime costs of \$15.9 billion for that year alone. Working to prevent new HIV transmissions in the U.S. would ultimately result in savings for the U.S.

Given the opportunity to save lives, promote lifelong health, as well as contain costs by ending the HIV epidemic, the undersigned organizations offer the following recommendations to strengthen our nation's response to the HIV epidemic. Additionally, as you craft major pieces of legislation like appropriations and reconciliation, we ask that you consider how changes to federal programs impact our nation's response to HIV. We stress the importance of ensuring HIV funding allocated by Congress is awarded and distributed as intended; this is essential to maintain stable HIV care, treatment, and prevention for millions of Americans. We offer our assistance in your efforts to reduce the

number of new transmissions, improve the lives of those living with HIV, and ultimately end the epidemic.

### **1. Fully Fund and Expand the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative**

The innovative EHE initiative, conceived and initiated during the first Trump Administration, has demonstrated success. From 2019 to 2023, new HIV diagnoses in priority jurisdictions decreased by 21%, compared to only 6% in non-EHE areas. Reaching EHE goals by 2030 would prevent 255,000 HIV cases and save \$127.5 billion in direct lifetime medical costs. You and your colleagues can maintain and accelerate these gains with proper funding and leadership.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Increase funding to meet existing goals by expanding access to HIV prevention, diagnosis, and treatment services for the 57 priority EHE areas, including funding to expand the pilot for a national PrEP program launched in 2024.
- Enhance support for Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program clinics and providers, community health centers to increase PrEP uptake, and innovative outreach and testing strategies to reach underserved communities.

### **2. Maintain Federal Investment in Core Public Health Programs**

The EHE initiative must maintain the solid foundation of ongoing prevention and treatment programs. These programs have been severely underfunded which limits their ability to respond to the growing concurrent challenges to public health of HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), hepatitis, and TB (tuberculosis).

#### **Recommendations:**

- Increase critical funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) divisions addressing HIV, STIs, hepatitis, and TB.
- Fully support the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which serves over 576,000 clients with over 90% achieving viral suppression.
- Preserve and expand the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program to address the critical link between housing stability and health outcomes.
- Fund the National Institutes of Health's HIV/AIDS research coordinated by the Office of AIDS Research.

### **3. Ensure Access to Affordable, Quality Health Care**

Medicaid, Medicare, and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provide crucial health care coverage for people living with and impacted by HIV. Over 40% of individuals with HIV rely on Medicaid, and the ACA has enabled millions to access comprehensive care and prevention services. Medicare coverage is essential as the population of people living with HIV age and experience accelerated co-morbid conditions associated with aging.



**Recommendations:**

- Oppose significant cuts to Medicaid, including those proposed in the fiscal year 2025 and 2026 reconciliation processes.
- Ensure that Medicare, Medicaid, and ACA-related insurance plans provide all enrollees access to HIV, hepatitis, and STI screening, prevention, and treatment without undue administrative barriers and cost-sharing.

**4. Meet and Engage with Impacted Communities**

Hearing directly from people impacted by HIV provides a nuanced understanding of the challenges they face. These perspectives are vital to shaping policies that reflect the realities of those most affected by the HIV epidemic. By connecting and engaging, Members of Congress can understand how federal policies affect their constituents and move us toward ending the HIV epidemic.

**Recommendations:**

- Throughout the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, meet with advocates and constituents from impacted communities to hear how legislative efforts align with community needs.
- Visit HIV-focused community-based and health organizations in your district or state to learn about successful models that could be scaled up or supported through federal initiatives.

We encourage you to join and actively participate in the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus to help advance bipartisan efforts to end the HIV epidemic and support those affected by it. Our coalition has hundreds of members across the U.S., and we are happy to connect you with any organization that is doing crucial on-the-ground work to end the HIV epidemic.

Over the coming months, many of FAPP's eight work groups will hold briefings, advocacy days, and office visits outlining various coalition priorities. We hope you or your staff will accept and/or join these events.

We congratulate you again and look forward to your leadership on our nation's critical issues. If you have any questions, please contact the FAPP co-chairs: John Meade ([john@AVAC.org](mailto:john@AVAC.org)) with AVAC, Kathie Hiers ([kathie@aidsalabama.org](mailto:kathie@aidsalabama.org)) with AIDS Alabama, or Mike Weir ([mweir@NASTAD.org](mailto:mweir@NASTAD.org)) with NASTAD.

**Organizational Sign-Ons:**

AcadianaCARES	AIDS Foundation Chicago
Act Now: End AIDS (ANEA) Coalition	AIDS United
AIDS Alabama	Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families	AVAC



Center for Health Law and Policy  
Innovation  
Equality California  
Equitas Health  
Five Horizons Health Services  
Georgia AIDS Coalition  
HealthHIV  
HIV Medicine Association  
HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute  
NASTAD  
National Association of County and City  
Health Officials  
National Black Gay Men's Advocacy  
Coalition  
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS  
Network

National HIV/AIDS Housing Coalition  
National Working Positive Coalition  
NMAC  
PrEP4All  
Prevention Access Campaign  
Ribbon-A Center of Excellence  
Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition  
SAGE  
San Francisco AIDS Foundation  
The AIDS Institute  
The Reunion Project  
Thrive Alabama  
Treatment Action Group (TAG)  
U.S. PLHIV Caucus