

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

March 16, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

As you continue your work on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we respectfully request an increase of \$197 million in Fiscal Year 2007 for AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs) under the Ryan White CARE Act. ADAPs continue to be a critical component of the safety net for Americans living with HIV/AIDS. However, ongoing funding shortages threaten states' ability to provide comprehensive treatment for all those who need it.

HIV/AIDS remains a major health care crisis here in the United States, as well as abroad. Even as there has been a great deal of attention on our united efforts in Congress to enhance the U.S. role in fighting the Global AIDS epidemic, it is equally important that we act to meet the needs of people here at home who are suffering with HIV/AIDS. Approximately 1.1 million United States residents are living with HIV/AIDS. For too many of these Americans, treatments are out of reach without our help.

ADAPs provide life-saving HIV/AIDS medications to uninsured and underinsured individuals living with HIV disease in 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. Additionally, ADAP programs often serve as the entry point for individuals to access other HIV/AIDS health services. While ADAPs have administered their funds efficiently, they face a growing crisis due to increased utilization as people with HIV/AIDS live longer. We commend the Committee for its past efforts to address the needs of those living with HIV/AIDS here at home especially considering the difficult budgetary environment.

We greatly appreciate the \$70 million increase for care and treatment included in President Bush's FY2007 budget and his desire to help those states in greatest need. This increase, while larger than the increases received in the recent past, simply does not keep pace with the increasing needs of patients in the United States.

Increased utilization combined with a shortfall in state funding for ADAPs has caused a funding crisis which forced 954 ADAP-eligible patients to be placed on waiting lists. Eighteen states have taken steps to limit eligibility, including ten that have capped enrollment. In addition to those that currently rely on ADAPs for HIV treatment, there are many HIV-positive Americans who in need of treatment. A recent report by the Institute of Medicine, "Public Financing and Delivery of HIV/AIDS Care: Securing the Legacy of Ryan White," found that over 233,000 HIV-positive Americans do not have consistent access to highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).<sup>1</sup> A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that only 55% of HIV-positive U.S. residents for whom antiretroviral treatment is clinically recommended were receiving therapy in 2003. Further, many ADAPs are now unable to provide clients with access to newly developed therapies for patients who are running out of

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<sup>1</sup> "Public Financing and Delivery of HIV/AIDS: Securing the Legacy of Ryan White." Institute of Medicine, May 13, 2004.

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Dear Ranking Member Obey:

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Control and Prevention found that only 55% of HIV-positive U.S. residents for whom antiretroviral treatment is clinically recommended were receiving therapy in 2003. Further, many ADAPs are now unable to provide clients with access to newly developed therapies for patients who are running out of treatment options. In addition, because of budget constraints, most ADAPs do not provide coverage for treatments for hepatitis C co-infection, which is now a leading cause of death for people with HIV/AIDS.

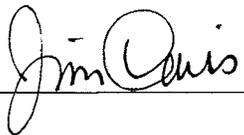
In order to address this critical shortfall, we urge the Committee to provide an additional \$197 million for ADAPs in Fiscal Year 2007. This requested increase is based on the needs analysis conducted by State ADAP programs, HIV/AIDS health care providers and patient groups. It is necessary to maintain access to life-saving treatments for current HIV/AIDS patients being served by ADAPs and prevent further limitations on access to treatments for new patients.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's past support for this program and thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

  
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Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

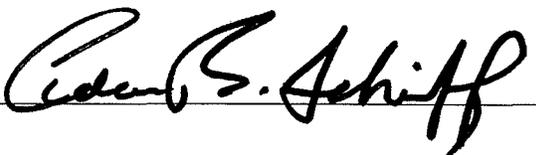
  
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Mary Bono  
Member of Congress

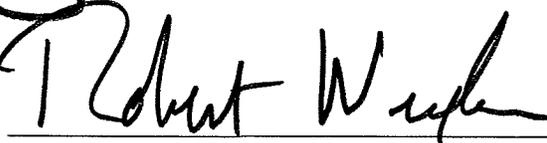
  
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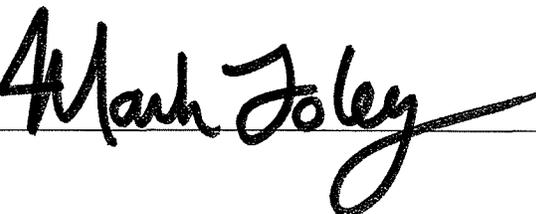
  
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Phil Abruzzo

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Danny K. Davis

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George Miller

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Tammy Baldwin

Phil Van Allen

Steve Jefferson

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Mark Udall

Brad Lister

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**FY07 ADAP Letter Signers: (81)**

Abercrombie, Neil  
Ackerman, Gary  
Allen, Tom  
Andrews, Robert  
Baldwin, Tammy  
Blumenauer, Earl  
Bono, Mary  
Brady, Bob  
Brown, Sherrod  
Brown, Corrine  
Capuano, Mike  
Carnahan, Russ  
Case, Ed  
Christensen, Donna  
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Cummings, Elijah E.  
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Dicks, Norm  
Dingell, John  
Emanuel, Rahm  
Eshoo, Anna  
Etheridge, Bob  
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Gutierrez, Luis V.  
Hastings, Alcee  
Higgins, Brian  
Hinchey, Maurice  
Hinojosa, Ruben  
Holt, Rush  
Honda, Mike  
Jackson-Lee, Sheila  
Jefferson, William  
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Lantos, Tom  
Larson, John  
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Levin, Sander  
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LoBiondo, Frank  
Lofgren, Zoe  
Lynch, Stephen  
McCarthy, Carolyn  
McDermott, Jim  
McGovern, James  
McHugh, John  
McNulty, Michael  
Meek, Kendrick .  
Meeks, Gregory  
Millender-McDonald, Juanita  
Miller, Brad  
Miller, George  
Moran, Jim  
Nadler, Jerrold  
Ortiz, Salomon  
Pallone, Frank  
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Payne, Donald  
Price, David  
Ruppersberger, C.A. Dutch  
Saxton, Jim  
Schakowsky, Jan  
Schiff, Adam  
Shays, Chris  
Smith, Chris  
Strickland, Ted  
Tierney, John  
Townsend, Edolphus  
Udall, Mark  
Van Hollen, Chris  
Wasserman Schultz, Debbie  
Waters, Maxine  
Watt, Mel  
Waxman, Henry  
Wexler, Robert