

# HIV Health Care Access Working Group

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
Assistant Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jay Rockefeller  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

June 4, 2010

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Senators Durbin, Baucus, and Rockefeller:

We are writing on behalf of the HIV Health Care Access Working Group to urge you to ensure that the Senate version of H.R. 4213, “The American Jobs, Closing Tax Loopholes and Preventing Outsourcing Act” includes the provision to extend the enhanced increase in federal Medicaid funding (FMAP) to states through June 30, 2011.

The HIV Health Care Access Working Group is a coalition of over 100 national and community-based AIDS service organizations representing HIV medical providers, advocates, people living with HIV/AIDS, and providers of critical HIV-related health care and support services.

The enhanced FMAP provision in H.R. 4213 is critically important to our member organizations because more than 40 percent of people with HIV rely on Medicaid for access to lifesaving medical care and treatment. Due to the national economic crisis and the expanding HIV epidemic, the nation’s HIV care system is already unable to meet the need for HIV care. More than 1,000 people who need HIV treatment are currently on waiting lists for Ryan White AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, and HIV clinics are being forced to cut hours and critical treatment services. If the enhanced FMAP is not extended, states will be forced to cut Medicaid benefits and increase cost sharing—further burdening the HIV care system, limiting access to vital health care services, and jeopardizing the health of those who depend on Medicaid or Ryan White services. This threat comes at a time when more people need access to health care through Medicaid and Ryan White programs due to the loss of a job and insurance coverage. In addition, the effects of states losing the enhanced FMAP could significantly hamper implementation of the President’s National HIV/AIDS Strategy, which seeks to reduce new HIV infections, increase access to quality health care and improve health outcomes, and reduce HIV-related health disparities.

We strongly urge you to include the enhanced FMAP extension in the final bill to help ensure that states are able to meet the healthcare needs of our country’s most vulnerable residents. People with HIV/AIDS are counting on you to do the right thing and ensure that their health is not compromised during these tough economic times that continue to devastate state budgets.

For more information, contact Laura Hanen (National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors) at 202.434.8091, or Robert Greenwald (Treatment Access Expansion Project) at 617.390.2584.

Sincerely,  
The Steering Committee of the HIV Health Care Access Working Group

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AIDS Action | AIDS Action Baltimore | AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families | AIDS Foundation of Chicago | The AIDS Institute  
AIDS Project Los Angeles | AIDS Treatment Data Network | American Academy of HIV Medicine | Broward House – Ft. Lauderdale  
Community Access National Network | Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project | Gay Men’s Health Crisis | Harlem United  
Health and Disability Advocates | HIV Medicine Association | HIVictorious, Inc. | Housing Works | Moveable Feast  
National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors | National Association of People With AIDS | National Minority AIDS Council  
The National Working Positive Coalition | Project Inform | San Francisco AIDS Foundation | South Carolina Campaign to End AIDS  
Treatment Access Expansion Project | Treatment Action Group | VillageCare of New York