

Protect Access to Health Care for People with HIV

January 9, 2017

President-elect Donald J. Trump
Presidential Transition Headquarters
1800 F Street NW
Washington DC 20270-0117

Dear President-elect Trump:

The **190** undersigned organizations are writing to **strongly urge you not to support a repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) without a clearly defined replacement plan and to maintain the current funding structure of the Medicaid program as you consider major changes to these health care programs that people living with HIV and their providers rely on.**

We are national, state, and local organizations representing people living with HIV and those affected by HIV, public health and medical providers, HIV/AIDS service organizations, housing providers, and legal advocates from across the United States.

With bipartisan support, we have made significant strides in responding to the HIV epidemic in the United States and abroad. We now have highly effective prevention and treatment options that allow us to envision ending the AIDS epidemic. However, doing so requires that individuals at risk for HIV and those living with HIV have affordable, reliable access to comprehensive health coverage.

The ACA provided many people living with HIV with health insurance coverage for the first time. Prior to the ACA's health reforms, they, and many others with chronic conditions, were denied private health insurance coverage or could not afford the high cost of the coverage available to them. Even those living on very low incomes often faced the cruel irony that they would not qualify for Medicaid coverage until they became sick and disabled by AIDS. Returning to a pre-ACA state would be disastrous for many individuals who are finally able to access health care under the current initiatives and would undermine public health efforts to end the AIDS epidemic.

We are deeply concerned that efforts to quickly do away with the ACA, without simultaneously providing meaningful health coverage alternatives, will leave millions of Americans uninsured or underinsured. People with HIV and countless others cannot afford to be stripped of their health insurance coverage. Their health, and in many cases their lives, and our nation's public health depend on preserving and building on the reforms that have worked for them, providing access to essential, life-saving health care services and prescription drugs. We strongly urge consideration of the key reform principles listed below before repealing the law or modifying the programs.

- **Prevent any disruptions in health coverage**, as the failure to do so will have negative health consequences for up to 30 million individuals whose health coverage is at risk in addition to serious public health and economic consequences for all Americans. Do not modify current law without having meaningful, adequately funded alternatives available. We believe it is critical to

This letter is sponsored by the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership's HIV Health Care Access Working Group. The HHCAWG co-chairs are Carmel Shachar with the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation (cshachar@law.harvard.edu), Amy Killelea with the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (akillelea@NASTAD.org) and Andrea Weddle with the HIV Medicine Association (aweddle@hivma.org).

have a plan for seamless continuation of coverage in place *before* announcing repeal or modifying the law to avoid negative repercussions in the market from insurers.

- **Maintain critical reforms that address unfair or discriminatory insurer practices**, including laws that prohibit insurers from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions or charging individuals more based on health status or gender, or excluding coverage of treatments for specific conditions. These consumer protections should not be contingent on continuous coverage requirements.
- **Maintain the current funding structure, including the entitlement, of the Medicaid program**, to allow states to respond to current need and increased demand for Medicaid coverage during tough economic times, unanticipated outbreaks or disasters and when there are health innovations, such as the recent curative breakthrough treatments for hepatitis C.
- **Ensure access to a minimum essential benefits package** that includes the range of services and treatments that people at risk for and those living with HIV need to stay healthy, including prescription drug benefits, substance use and mental health treatment, and preventive services without cost-sharing.
- **Keep health coverage, health services and prescription drugs affordable** by ensuring adequate, up front premium and cost sharing assistance for lower income individuals to afford health plans that provide comprehensive coverage. Low income individuals need assistance at the time the bills are due or they will forgo medically necessary treatment and care. Maintain the bans on annual and lifetime benefits caps to ensure access to care and coverage when it's needed most.
- **Sustain strong non-discrimination protections** such as Section 1557 of the ACA that prohibit insurers or providers from discriminating against individuals on the basis of their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

We hope that we can count on you to consider the health care and socioeconomic needs of people living with HIV and millions of others who now rely on the marketplaces and Medicaid for access to their care and treatment. We are hopeful that any health care reforms proposed under the new Administration and Congress will provide protections for those living with chronic conditions and build upon the lessons learned over the last eight years of health care reform efforts.

Respectfully submitted by the **190** undersigned organizations,

ALABAMA

Southern AIDS Coalition

ARIZONA

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation

ARKANSAS

Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Inc.

CALIFORNIA

AIDS Legal Referral Panel

Alameda County Office of HIV Health Services

APAIT, a division of Special Service for Groups

APLA Health

Asian Health Services

California LGBT Health and Human Services Network

Equality California

HIV ACCESS

HIVE

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley

Los Angeles LGBT Center

Natural Wholistic Health & Wellness Research Center

PleasePrEPMe

Positive Resource Center

Positive Women's Network - USA

Project Inform

Sacramento LGBT Community Center

San Francisco AIDS Foundation

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Sierra HOPE

Transgender Law Center

West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation

COLORADO

Boulder Community Health

CONNECTICUT

Human Resource Agency New Britain

DELAWARE

Delaware HIV Consortium

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (DC)

ADAP Advocacy Association (aaa+)

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth
& Families AIDS United

AIDS United

CAEAR Coalition

Community Access National Network

Family and Medical Counseling Services, Inc.

G III Associates

GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality

HealthHIV

HIPS

Human Rights Campaign

National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS
DirectorsNational Association of County and City Health
Officials

National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition

NBGMAC

National Black Justice Coalition

National Center for Transgender Equality

National Latino AIDS Action Network

National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund)

NMAC

Out2Enroll

Presbyterian AIDS Network, PC USA

RAHMA

The AIDS Institute

The American Academy of HIV Medicine

Urban Coalition for HIV/AIDS Prevention Services
(UCHAPS)**FLORIDA**

Broward County - Ryan White Part A Program

Comprehensive Care Clinic

Hope and Help Center of Central Florida, Inc.

Northeast Florida AIDS Network, Inc.

Suncoast Health Council, Inc.

GEORGIA

Clarion Group

Georgia AIDS Coalition

HIV Dental Alliance

iknowAwareness LLC

Trans Housing Atlanta Program, Inc.

HAWAII

Gregory House Programs

Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation

Maui AIDS Foundation

The CHOW Project

IOWA

Siouxland Pride Alliance

IDAHO

Dab the AIDS Bear Project

ILLINOIS

AIDS Foundation of Chicago

Chicago House and Social Service Agency

Chicago Women's AIDS Project

HIV Prevention Justice Alliance

Howard Brown Health

Open Door Health Center of Illinois

Test Positive Aware Network

WHARP

INDIANA

LifeCare

KENTUCKY

Matthew 25 AIDS Services

LOUISIANA

Office of Health Policy and AIDS Funding

PWN-USA-Louisiana

MARYLAND

AIDS Action Baltimore

Center For Black Equity-Baltimore

Moveable Feast Inc.

Privia

Tell Me More Social Research and Consulting

Total Health Care

MASSACHUSETTS

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts

Community Catalyst

Community Research Initiative of New England, Inc.

John Snow, Inc.

NEAETC

New North Citizens Council Inc

Treatment Access Expansion Project

MICHIGAN

AL GAMEA

A.R.I.S.E (Association of Refugees, Immigrants and Survivors
of human trafficking Engage in the AIDS response)

CARES

Health Emergency Lifeline Programs

HIV/AIDS Alliance of Michigan Lansing Area

AIDS Network

Michigan Coalition for HIV Health and Safety

SEMHAC

Unified - HIV Health and Beyond

MINNESOTA

Clare Housing

Hope House of St. Croix Valley

Minnesota AIDS Project

Open Arms of Minnesota

Rural AIDS Action Network

MISSISSIPPI

Community Impact, Inc.

MISSOURI

Erise Williams and Associates Inc

Saint Louis Effort for AIDS

NEVADA

Las Vegas Urban League

NEW JERSEY

Buddies of New Jersey

New Jersey Association on Correction

NEW MEXICO

Southwest CARE Center

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NEW YORK**ACRIA**

Amida Care

ASCNYC

BOOM!Health

Callen-Lorde Community Health Center

Community Health Action

Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)

God's Love We Deliver

Harm Reduction Coalition

Housing Works, Inc

Ijo Orisa Church

Knights of Columbus

Lambda Legal

Latino Commission on AIDS

Love Heals /Acria

Love Heals the Alison Gertz Foundation
for AIDS Education, Inc.New York City Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene

NY Transgender Advocacy Group

Prevention Access Campaign

SMART University

The Center for HIV Law and Policy

Treatment Action Group

Unique People Services

VillageCare

NORTH CAROLINA

Community Alternative Housing

Fairgrove Primary Health

HomeCare for the Carolinas Clinic

Southern HIV/AIDS Strategy Initiative (SASI)
at Duke University

The Red Ribbon Society

The Steady Collective

OHIO

ADAP Educational Initiative

Association of Nurses in AIDS Care

Miami Valley Positives for Positives

Nightsweats & T-cells, Co.

Piedmont Health Services & Sickle Cell Agency

RiseUpToHIV, Inc.

The Gazelle Giggles Play Institute, Inc.

OREGON

Health Education Network

Multnomah County Health Department

Partnership Project

Quest Center for Integrative Health

PENNSYLVANIA

ACT UP Philadelphia

AIDS Free Pittsburgh

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania

AIDS Resource Alliance, Inc.

AIDS Services Center at St. Luke's University
Health Network

Campaign To End AIDS and ACT Up Philadelphia

Caring Communities For AIDS, Inc.

MANNA (Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition
Alliance)**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Lowcountry AIDS Services C.A.B.

Newhorizons Healthcare

Positive Women's Network – USA

South Carolina Campaign to End AIDS

TENNESSEE

Columbia CARES

Friends For Life

Kingsport Housing & Redevelopment Authority

Nashville CARES

Tennessee Asso. of People With AIDS TAPWA

TEXAS

AIDS Arms, Inc.

Georgetown University

House of Blahnik, Inc.

Legacy Community Health

Program for Wellness Restoration, PoWeR

Resource Center

Valley AIDS Council

Westbrook Clinic

UTAH

Utah Ryan White Part C/D Programs

VIRGINIA

Appalachian Independence Center, Inc.

Blue Ridge Independent Living Center

HIV Medicine Association

Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition

disAbility Resource Center

WASHINGTON

Pierce County AIDS Foundation