



SOUND THE ALARM COALITION, endorsed by 20 national organizations that work to fight HIV
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TALKING POINTS FOR HIV/AIDS FUNDING BEING DEBATED IN CONGRESS

What's happening?

- This month Congress is voting on appropriations bills that will fund HIV/AIDS programs. At the moment, the funding level proposed by President Obama is billions of dollars too low to effectively treat and prevent HIV in the US and abroad.
- Congress needs to ensure three life-saving programs receive special attention: 1) Global AIDS, 2) Domestic AIDS Housing, and 3) Syringe Exchange.
- The economy might be in a recession, but HIV isn't. 20 groups, including service providers and advocacy groups focused on global AIDS, housing and/or harm reduction, have teamed up to ensure that during the economic crisis, Congress doesn't forget about the HIV crisis. The groups have organized rallies in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Wisconsin and are promoting a national Call-in to Congress day on July 7th, when thousands of people will call Senate Appropriations Committee members, and Congressional leadership.

More about these life-saving programs:

- **Fully Fund Global AIDS Efforts**
 - The US and the rest of the international community set a goal of having universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care worldwide by 2010. To achieve this goal, the US needs to invest \$2.7 billion in the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in 2010. That's our fair share and if we don't provide ours then other countries won't provide theirs. The proposed US budget for the fund is only \$900 million, the same level of funding as the Global Fund received in 2009.
 - HIV/AIDS/malaria/tuberculosis hit poor countries the hardest, but in our globalized world, the US isn't immune to the economic, health, and security consequences of these pandemics.
 - The US also combats HIV/AIDS with PEPFAR funding, which should also be increased by at least \$1 billion to meet the legislative requirements Congress set when the program was reauthorized last year.
- **Fully Fund Domestic AIDS Housing Programs**
 - Access to quality housing for people living with HIV is as beneficial as access to medication. It also lowers the chance of HIV transmission to uninfected people.
 - Congress needs to invest \$50 million more dollars into the Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS program (HOPWA). The proposed budget for HOPWA this year is \$310 million, the same level as it received in 2009. In the midst of an economic crisis, shelters and other housing programs are strained to capacity, and are not able to meet the growing needs of homeless people, whether they are living with HIV or not.
- **Lift the Ban on Syringe Exchange Programs**
 - Syringe exchange programs are easy and effective ways to stop people from acquiring HIV.
 - Cities that have operating syringe exchange programs have seen an 80% decrease in HIV infection in injection drug using communities.
 - The medical community supports them because countless medical studies have shown that they do not increase drug use, but instead needle exchange programs keep people healthy and can be a gateway for users to seek treatment.
 - President Obama says he is strongly in favor of lifting the ban but Congress must act through the Appropriations bill.

More About HIV/AIDS in America:

- According to the US Center for Disease Control, 1.1 million Americans were living with HIV at the end of 2006. That's the most recent number. 65,000 people are newly infected with HIV each year.
- More than 1/3 of cases in the US – 300,000 people living with HIV – are related to IV-drug use.

More About HIV/AIDS Abroad:

- In 2007, UNAIDS estimated 32 million people in the world are living with HIV/AIDS.
- 10-13 million people are in clinical need of HIV treatment, but only four million have access.
- By 2010, there will be 20 million AIDS orphans worldwide.