



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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DOMESTIC AIDS CARE THREATENED BY CONGRESSIONAL FAILURE TO PASS RYAN WHITE MODERNIZATION ACT

STATES & CITIES SET TO LOSE MILLIONS IF CONGRESS DOES NOT ACT PRIOR TO ADJOURNMENT

Washington, DC – As the world focuses on the global AIDS pandemic on World AIDS Day, The AIDS Institute is asking the United States Congress to address the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic by passing the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 prior to its adjournment. “Failure to pass the bill,” said Dr. Gene Copello, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute, “will result in serious funding disruptions in many states and cities, which will result in reduced healthcare and drug treatment for many low-income people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States.”

The carefully crafted AIDS care and treatment bill authored by a bi-partisan, bi-cameral group of Congressional healthcare leaders over the past two years, passed the House of Representatives overwhelmingly by a vote of 325 to 98, but has been blocked in the Senate. Senators from the States of New York and New Jersey have prevented the bill’s passage despite repeated attempts to pass it.

Without passage of the bill, the current out-dated Ryan White CARE Act would remain in effect, and HIV case counts would be factored in for the distribution of funds to the states and cities. (To date, funding has been distributed based only on the number of AIDS cases.) The CDC does not accept HIV case counts from several states since they do not yet have mature reporting systems, so only their AIDS cases would be considered. The bill pending before the Senate addresses the situation in a reasonable manner, but if it is not passed many states and cities, including California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Georgia and the District of Columbia, will lose millions of dollars.

Today, The AIDS Institute in a letter pleaded with the Senators who are impeding the bill’s passage and urged them to accept a compromise that has been offered to them. Instead of passing a reauthorization bill that would last five years, the compromise would be a reauthorization for only three years. This would result in the guaranteed protection of stable funding to the cities and states, something the 5-year proposal would not guarantee in years 4 and 5.

The Ryan White CARE Act was originally passed in 1990, and reauthorized twice since then. The current authorization expired September 30, 2005. Over 535,000 low-income people living with HIV/AIDS receive lifesaving healthcare, drug treatment and support services provided by Ryan White grantees.

The bill pending before the Congress contains numerous reforms that seek to update the current law to better reflect today’s epidemic and directs limited resources throughout the country in a more equitable fashion. It also prioritizes medical core services, including medications; takes into account HIV case counts, in addition to AIDS cases; and addresses such issues as co-morbidities, unspent funds, accountability, and coordination of services.

For a copy of the letter from The AIDS Institute: visit www.TheAIDSInstitute.org
or [Senate Reauthorization Letter from The AIDS Institute](#)

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For more information and to become involved in AIDS advocacy work, please contact
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The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit agency that promotes action for social change through public policy research, advocacy and education.