

## Jeanne White-Ginder

9269 Silver Lake Drive  
Leesburg, FL 34788

June 7, 2006

The Honorable Mike Enzi  
379A Russell Senate Office Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Kennedy  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joe Barton  
2109 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Dingell  
2328 Rayburn House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Enzi and Kennedy and Representatives Barton and Dingell:

As Ryan White's mother and Board member of The AIDS Institute, I wanted to thank you for all the work you and your staff have put into updating the Ryan White CARE Act. I am deeply honored this lifesaving program that helps so many people with HIV/AIDS with healthcare services and medications carries the name of my son, Ryan, who died of AIDS in 1990. Back then we did not have access to all the extraordinary drugs that help so many people stay alive today. In the 25 years since AIDS was discovered, while we still don't have a cure, we can do a good job of keeping people alive and allow them to live productive lives-if they have access to healthcare and medications.

That is why the Ryan White CARE Act is so important. Every year, the program reaches over 571,000 uninsured or underinsured persons affected by HIV/AIDS, and in 2004 it provided medications to an estimated 138,834 persons. In the years ahead, the number of people who will rely on Ryan White CARE Act programs will continue to increase. Therefore, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act must be designed to meet not only the needs of today but the next five years.

Unfortunately, I am very concerned the bill, as approved by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, is woefully inadequate in one respect because it does not provide the necessary resources to meet the growing demand for Ryan White CARE Act drugs and services. I respectfully urge you to increase the funding levels contained in the bill so that the growing number of people who depend on the Ryan White CARE Act will have access to life-saving and life-extending healthcare services and medication over the next five years.

We already know that everyone in the United States who is in need of medications, perhaps as many as 300,000 people living with HIV/AIDS, is not receiving consistent antiretroviral therapy. We also know people are living longer, and they must continue to receive their medications and healthcare services to remain healthy. On top of that, there are an estimated 40,000 new HIV infections each year, and due to increased HIV testing programs and efforts to routinize testing, more people will require care and treatment. Finally, healthcare and drug costs continue to climb. For these reasons, the annual 3.7 percent increase proposed for some titles and the flat funding of others in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act is extremely low and must be increased. It does not even keep up with the medical inflation rate, let alone the growing demand for Ryan White CARE Act medications and healthcare services.

I urge you to provide adequate funding so that everyone who is in need of these lifesaving medications and medical care can have the chance to live productive, healthy and longer lives. We must make sure that people in this country get the basic medical and human services they need to battle this epidemic. We couldn't do it for Ryan and so many others, but we can do it now, only with your support. I hope I can count on you.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

*Jeanne White-Ginder*

cc: Members, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
Members, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
Secretary Michael Leavitt, HHS