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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,
AND RELATED AGENCIES
INTERIOR

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3222

April 26, 2004

Dear New York Colleague:

Please consider signing on to the attached letter to the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee chairman and ranking members regarding funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance (ADAP) program.

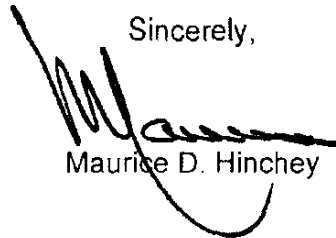
Federal ADAP funding is more critical than ever for New York State. We all know just how serious the AIDS epidemic is and how important it is to have the resources to fight it. There are almost 200,000 New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS.

ADAP makes it possible for low-income persons to purchase medications to treat HIV/AIDS. Congress created a separate funding stream to appropriate funds directly to state and urban ADAP programs, in large part to address the enormous need created by the advent of new combination drug therapies. ADAP funds go directly to aid the 22,000 New Yorkers who depend on the program to afford the high cost of these life-saving and life-extending therapies.

Low-income, uninsured and uninsurable New Yorkers account for nearly 20 percent of participants in the ADAP program nationwide. Last year's appropriation was not enough to ensure coverage for every patient that needs it. The attached letter requests additional funding to cover this year's budget shortfall and an increase of \$217 million for the program in the 2005 Fiscal Year.

For more information or to cosign the letter, please call or email Wendy Darwell in my office (5-6335).

Sincerely,



Maurice D. Hincney

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 3, 2004

The Honorable Ralph Regula, Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
2358 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge your support for a 2004 Fiscal Year Emergency Supplemental Appropriation of \$122 million for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), as part of a total request for a \$217 million ADAP increase in FY 2005. While we are very grateful for the \$35 million increase for ADAP in the FY 2004 Omnibus Appropriations bill, this allocation fell short of the \$215 million increase then needed to stave off the funding crisis that has led to waiting lists, restricted formularies and denial of treatment to those in need.

Funded under Title II of the Ryan White CARE Act, ADAP makes it possible for low-income persons to purchase medications to treat HIV/AIDS. As you know, Congress created a separate funding line to appropriate funds directly to ADAP, in large part to address the enormous need created by the advent of new combination drug therapies. These funds go directly to aid the more than 150,000 people who will depend on ADAP to afford the high cost of these life-saving and life-extending therapies in the coming 12 months.

In a very real sense, ADAP is a victim of its own success: the HIV disease treatments developed since 1996 have been remarkably successful in improving the health of HIV positive individuals and extending their lives, but these achievements continue to increase the demand for ADAP's services. The cost of these critical treatments is prohibitive, especially for people who are uninsured or underinsured.

In our home state of New York, where more than 22,000 people will be enrolled in ADAP, we know first-hand the importance of the ADAP program. New York has been

particularly hard-hit by the AIDS epidemic, with more than 150,000 residents diagnosed with AIDS, and 150,000 to 200,000 persons currently living with HIV/AIDS. The state government has been extremely supportive of ADAP, appropriating \$12 million per year since 1997 to supplement the federal program and, recognizing the current crisis, has budgeted up to \$40,000,000 for this year.

Despite New York's stateside commitment, there are dozens of states that find themselves unable to keep up with the demand for coverage under ADAP. As documented in the National ADAP Monitoring Report, some states are being forced to take drastic measures to offset the federal funding shortfall, including establishing waiting lists for AIDS medications, reducing drug coverage and restricting eligibility.

That is why we are extremely concerned about the lack of adequate ADAP resources for 2004. An emergency appropriation of \$122 million can be used immediately to prevent states from establishing wait lists or limiting enrollment, as 16 states have already been forced to do and five more expect to in the coming months. A \$217 million increase over the president's budget proposal would be sufficient to stave off drastic measures in states' programs through the ADAP fiscal year that begins on April 1, 2005.

ADAP and its access to care and treatment for low income and uninsurable HIV positive New Yorkers is critical to enabling our communities to make full use of the community-based system of HIV care and support provided by the Ryan White CARE Act, all of which are vital to New York and deserve the highest possible level of funding.

We are deeply grateful for the Committee's past support and thank you for this consideration of our request.

Best regards.

Sincerely,