



PRESS RELEASE

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Organization Contact: Jordan J Cohen
Phone: 202 290-2019 Fax: 202 506-6504
Email: jcohen@tiicann.org

Community Access National Network (CANN)
1901 18th Street NW 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20009
www.tiicann.org

CANN Commends Rep. Hastings for Amendment

\$42 Million Included In Budget Bill focused on Extensive Cuts

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Community Access National Network (CANN) commends Representative Alcee Hastings for his amendment to the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (H.R. 1). The amendment calls for an additional \$42 million dollars for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). ADAP has been underfunded for the better part of the past decade. As a result of insufficient funding, ADAPs across the nation are struggling. There are 6,452 people on ADAP waiting lists in eleven states as of February 17, 2011, with cost containment measures in eighteen states and disenrollment of ADAP clients in five states with more looming. The number of people that have been disenrolled, or “transferred” to philanthropic programs (Pharmaceutical Industry Patient Assistance Programs or the Welvista ADAP Wait List Solution) surpasses the number of people on waiting lists, taking in to account that Florida moved 6,500 people from ADAP to the Welvista Solution. The passage of Rep. Hastings’ amendment is a positive sign that Congress is aware of the ADAP crisis, and willing to take action to assist it even in these difficult economic times.

“We are very grateful to Rep. Hastings that an increase for ADAP was included in H.R.1, and I am hopeful that ADAP will continue to receive attention at the federal level,” Commented William Arnold, Executive Director of the Community Access National Network and long time HIV/AIDS advocate. “That being said, this increase for ADAP will be helpful but is not sufficient to take care of the individuals on the ADAP waiting lists and will not reenroll all those that have been removed. The need to be fiscally responsible should not come at the expense of social negligence and the uninsured and underinsured that are in need of life saving treatments. I hope that more Congressional Members look to Rep. Hastings’ positive actions as an example of what is needed,” continued Arnold.

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program is a payer of last resort for individuals who are uninsured or underinsured and unable to obtain necessary life saving antiretroviral (ARV) medications from any other source on a consistent basis. Individuals that receive ARVs and then are unable to obtain them can develop resistance to the medications they had been taking, requiring a new, often more expensive, medication regimen. As well, individuals that go without medications degrade more rapidly and require more hospitalizations for longer periods of time, generating very significant hospitalization costs, which could be avoided.. Providing HIV/AIDS drugs for low-income individuals who are unable to obtain them is a means of preventing further spread of HIV and keeping those individuals in the work force as a productive part of society.

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