

March 11, 2011



PRESS RELEASE

March 11, 2011

Washington, DC

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Congress Stalled on FY11 Budget – ADAP Wait Lists Grow Regardless ***The 112th Congress Works to Keep the Government Open as ADAP Waiting Lists Break 7,000 People***

WASHINGTON, D.C. – There are 7,261 people on ADAP waiting lists in eleven states as of March 10, 2011. Very little progress has been made by Congressional leaders to include meaningful legislation in the FY2011 Continuing Resolution for constituents that have been placed on AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) waiting lists. There have been some efforts to address the need for ADAP in FY2011 such as the amendment proposed by Representative Alcee Hastings (from Florida's 23rd district), which was passed in the House C.R. (although the bill did not pass in the Senate), and the inclusion of \$912.4 million for ADAP in the failed Senate Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act. The HIV/AIDS community appreciates this recognition, especially in Florida, where over half of the people on ADAP waiting lists reside. However, more effort is needed to have an impact for the ADAP clientele that need life saving antiretroviral medications.

“The ADAP crisis is much worse than what is reported on the wait list!” commented William Arnold, Executive Director of the Community Access National Network. “There are equal the number of people that have been disenrolled from ADAPs as there are on the waiting list, if not more. At least those on the waiting list or temporarily transferred to Patient Assistance Programs are still in the system and being monitored. The unfortunate ones that are disenrolled can easily fall off the radar and out of treatment. Once that happens it is unlikely that they will return. If it weren't for the efforts of the Pharmaceutical Industry to temporarily find other sources of medications for the disenrolled, thousands of HIV+ people would be going without meds. Congress needs to act, and act QUICKLY, or this temporary solution is all for naught.”

“Unless we address projected shortfalls in the budget for ADAP, the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York could get worse,” said Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY). “I am working with other members of the New York congressional delegation to ensure that State Programs receive sufficient support from the Federal Government. Without that support, I fear that things could get worse and in the long run that will cost us a great deal more in lost lives, and an increase in the number of those who will rely on costly medical treatments.”

The racial and ethnic minority population has also been hard hit by ADAP's underfunding. Congresswoman Donna Christensen, from the U.S. Virgin Islands, chairs the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust and has consistently fought for additional funding for ADAP. “The warnings of the current ADAP crisis that many members of Congress and the advocacy community have given over the years are coming to pass,” remarked Congresswoman Christensen. “I am concerned about the majority of HIV+ individuals on ADAP who are located in the southern states. Over 90% of those individuals are from the minority community, in states with already stretched budgets. I find it wholly unacceptable that the Federal government is unwilling to support the American demographic most in need. When the current Continuing Resolution expires, it is absolutely necessary to increase the funding levels for ADAP. It is infeasible for the issues in ADAP to be solved with limited financing.”

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