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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **WAITING LIST POISED TO PASS 5,000**

***May Force Patients to Be Dis-enrolled by the Hundreds***

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – While the nation gears up for the 2010 mid-term elections, HIV/AIDS patients requiring life-saving medical attention are being placed on a waiting list at a steady rate. In the past three months, the waiting list has almost doubled to 3,765, up from 1,840 on July 1. During this time, Congress has adjourned twice and failed both times to find the additional \$101 million to restore access to medication for the growing number of patients.

The HIV/AIDS community has been warning Congress about the growing national crisis throughout the year, requesting an additional \$126 million for FY 2010 in order to prevent waiting lists. In May, Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina introduced a bill in the Senate finding the needed money through unobligated stimulus funds. North Carolina had the largest waiting list until the state legislature allocated \$14 million. In July, President Obama found an additional \$25 million for the eleven states with AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) waiting lists.

“Even after North Carolina found \$14 million of its own funds in addition to the President’s money, it still has a waiting list of 52 people,” commented William Arnold, Executive Director of the Community Access National Network. “President Obama’s \$25 million funding stream immediately helped some states, but the redirected money has not been enough to stop the growing waiting list. Other states like Florida are continuing to make people wait at a quickening pace. If Florida joins the current trend of dis-enrolling waitlist patients, hundreds of people may *disappear* from the system of care in place for individuals with HIV/AIDS, and they will lose the chance to eventually have access to their drugs from ADAP.”

On September 29, protestors from the HIV/AIDS community gathered outside the White House to call attention to the worsening ADAP crisis. Patients will continue to be placed on the waiting list while Congress is out to campaign for this year’s election. Congress must act as soon as it reconvenes if lives are to be saved in the HIV/AIDS community. Despite recognition from House Members like Alcee Hastings of Florida, Donna Christensen of the Virgin Islands, and Barbara Lee of California, House leadership has failed to take definitive action to fund ADAP.

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