

ADAP Working Group
1775 "T" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 20, 2003

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 2003 Fiscal Year Emergency Supplemental Appropriation of \$145 million for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), as well as to request an increase of \$283 million in ADAP funding for FY '04. These increases are necessary to ensure access to medication for HIV/AIDS patients in need through March 31, 2005.

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 currently 150,000 to 200,000 persons 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

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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 both 2003 and 2004. An emergency appropriation of \$145 million can be used immediately to prevent states from establishing wait lists or limiting enrollment; a \$283 million increase over the president's budget proposal would be sufficient to stave off drastic measures in state's programs through the ADAP fiscal year that begins April 4, 2004.

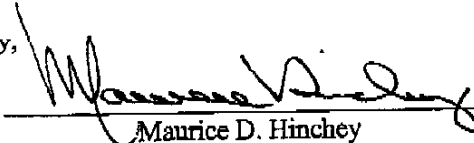
ADAP and its access to care and treatment for low income and uninsurable HIV positive New Yorkers is critical to enabling our communities to make full use of the community-based system of HIV care and support provided by the Ryan White CARE Act, all of which are vital to New York and deserve the highest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

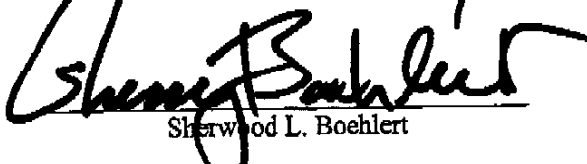
We are deeply grateful for the Committee's past support and thank you for this consideration of our request.

Best regards.

Sincerely,


Sue W. Kelly

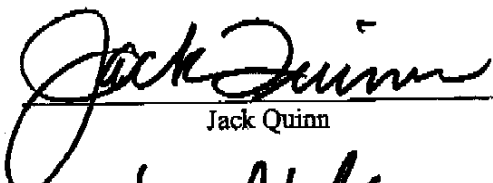

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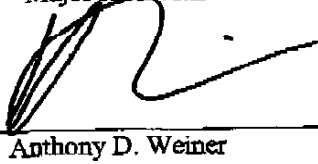
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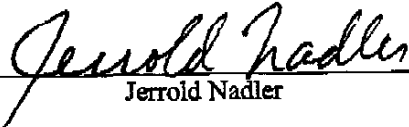

José E. Serrano

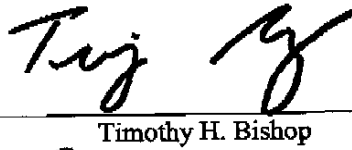

Major R. Owens

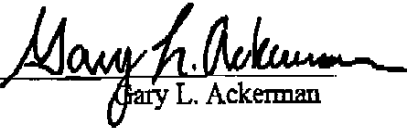

Edolphus Towns

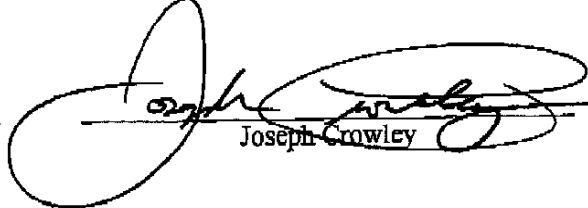

Anthony D. Weiner


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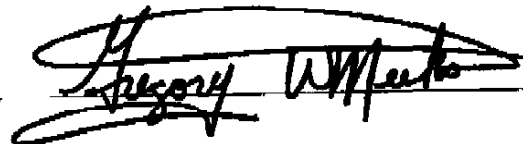

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