

HIV+HEP
POLICY INSTITUTE

PRESS RELEASE

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**Congress Proposes Increases for Ending HIV
*Funding for Hepatitis Programs Falls Short***

Washington DC... House and Senate appropriators have proposed an increase of approximately \$137 million for ramping up efforts to end HIV in the United States in the FY2021 omnibus spending [bill](#) released today. This builds on the \$266 million Congress appropriated for the first year of the historic initiative to end HIV by 2030 by scaling up HIV testing, prevention, and treatment programs in jurisdictions most impacted by HIV.

“We thank the president for initially proposing and now the Congress for including increased funding for the second year of the [Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative](#),” commented **Carl Schmid, executive director** of the **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute**. “While it is not as much as we anticipated, it is reassuring that both the House and Senate, in a bipartisan fashion, support increases to our public health efforts so that we can continue the momentum already created and make further progress in ending HIV in the U.S.”

In the final bill, the Congress is proposing increases of \$35 million for the CDC’s HIV prevention efforts; \$35 million for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program; \$52 million for the Community Health Centers to focus on PrEP, a once-daily pill that prevents HIV transmission; \$5 million for the Indian Health Service for HIV and hepatitis; and an added \$10 million for NIH’s Centers for AIDS Research.

The president’s budget had called for an increase of \$412 million to these programs to scale up HIV prevention and treatment efforts to meet the goals of ending HIV by 2030. The House of Representatives, in its FY2021 bill, proposed only a \$55 million increase while the Senate proposed substantially more, \$207 million. The final spending levels, for the most part, were in between the House and Senate bills.

The final bill includes important funding increases for some other domestic HIV programs, including an increase of \$20 million for HUD’s Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), \$1.5 million for the Minority HIV/AIDS Fund, and \$1 million for the CDC’s School Health program.

The final bill also includes \$3 million more for the CDC's Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Diseases program to address HIV and hepatitis for a total of \$13 million.

Unfortunately, the bill fails to adequately address the increasing burden of hepatitis on our country, especially considering there are cures and vaccines available that can lead to hepatitis eradication. The CDC's Hepatitis Division received an increase of \$500,000, for a total of \$39.5 million, which is woefully inadequate to conduct hepatitis surveillance, screening, education, linkage to care, and outbreak response programs throughout the country, particularly as a result of the ongoing opioid crisis. The HHS recently issued a draft [national strategic plan](#) that calls for the elimination of hepatitis by 2030. In order to achieve that goal, significantly more funding will be needed.

The final bill continues the federal funding ban on the purchase of sterile syringes, which are used to prevent HIV and hepatitis.

HIV+Hep looks forward to final passage of the bill, working with the incoming Biden administration to further implement the *Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative* and to ensure there is continued increased funding for HIV and hepatitis in the future so that progress can be made to end these infectious diseases.

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The **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute** is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote quality and affordable healthcare for people living with or at risk of HIV, hepatitis, and other serious and chronic health conditions.