

# **HIV+HEP**

## POLICY INSTITUTE

### PRESS RELEASE

March 28, 2022

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## **Biden Budget Boosts Domestic HIV Funding & Proposes Nationwide PrEP Delivery Program**

*CDC Hepatitis Program Receives Increase*

Washington DC... President Biden is proposing an increase of \$377 million for the [Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. initiative](#) for a total of \$850 million for efforts to end HIV by 2030. Additionally, in response to the HIV community and several members of Congress' request to develop a program to increase access to PrEP, which are medications that prevent HIV, the [president's budget](#) calls for the creation of an ambitious ten-year \$9.8 billion nationwide PrEP delivery program. The budget includes numerous other program increases, including a bump of \$13.5 million for the CDC's hepatitis division.

"It is reassuring that President Biden is following through on his commitment to end HIV in the U.S by calling for increased funding for HIV prevention, care, and treatment programs in targeted jurisdictions with the highest levels of HIV. The increases are especially needed after COVID-19 stalled progress and Congress fell short in providing the requested increases for this year," commented **Carl Schmid, executive director** of the **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute**. "Hopefully, Congress will support these proposals so our efforts to end HIV can get back on track," continued Schmid.

"The proposed PrEP delivery program will elevate the discussion on the need to create a nationwide program to increase uptake of PrEP. This is particularly necessary for those communities who have not taken full advantage of the highly effective HIV prevention drugs, including Black and Latino gay men and Black women. Even with the availability of low-cost generic and free daily oral PrEP drugs, uptake has been low due to the lack of community and provider outreach, lab and other medical costs, along with stigma," said **Schmid**. "We look forward to developing a program that can pass the Congress and includes the newly approved once every two months PrEP drug, while providing the incentive for the development of more longer-acting drugs."

The **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute** has been leading an effort for the creation of a national PrEP program and has been working with members of Congress on legislation to create a grant program to provide PrEP for those who cannot afford it, along with community and provider outreach. The ["PrEP Assistance Program Act"](#) (HR 5605), introduced by Reps. Bonnie Watson Coleman, Barbara Lee, Adam Schiff, and Mondaire Jones currently has a total of 50 cosponsors. Sen. Tina Smith, Rep. Adam Schiff, and

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colleagues introduced the “[PrEP Access & Coverage Act](#),” (S 3295, HR 6117) and has 48 sponsors. Recently, **HIV+Hep** helped lead a community [letter](#) signed by 111 HIV and LGBTQ groups urging President Biden to include a national PrEP grant program in his upcoming budget.

“While Congress considers authorizing a national PrEP program, which will take time and stakeholder consensus, we must focus on increasing funding for those programs that can expand PrEP access immediately,” added Schmid.

The president has proposed a \$115 million increase for CDC HIV prevention programs, which will help expand PrEP access, and \$50 million more to broaden PrEP and PrEP-related services in community health centers. This would build on the existing \$122 million dedicated for PrEP among health centers.

For other elements of the *Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S.* initiative, the president proposes \$165 million more for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program for a total of \$290 million; and \$47 million more for HIV and hepatitis prevention activities at the Indian Health Service for a total of \$52 million.

“While the proposed total of \$54 million for hepatitis falls well short of the community’s request of \$140 million for the CDC Hepatitis Division and what is needed to implement the [national strategic plan](#) to eliminate hepatitis by 2030, it will help improve hepatitis testing and linkage to care and cure programs,” continued Schmid.

“In many ways, this is a very bold budget. Now it will be up to the Congress to deliberate and pass funding bills and a PrEP delivery program that are acceptable to both the House and the Senate. The **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute** looks forward to working with its colleagues and the Congress on shaping these programs that are essential to ending HIV,” concluded Schmid.

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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.