



November 15, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: Updating SAMHSA HIV Block Grant Criteria for States

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Leahy, and Vice Chairman Shelby:

The undersigned 39 organizations of the AIDS Budget and Appropriations Coalition (ABAC), a workgroup of the Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP), write to request inclusion of critical language in the final FY2023 Labor, HHS Appropriations bill that is necessary to expand our efforts to end the HIV epidemic in the U.S. As you work to finalize the bill, while ABAC continues to advocate for our coalition's FY2023 funding requests, **we urge you to include language that would modernize the way in which states qualify to be eligible for the HIV set-aside of the Substance Abuse Block Grant (SABG).**

We are simply asking that instead of using the outdated measurement of *AIDS* cases in order for a state to qualify for the 5 percent HIV set-aside, the number of *HIV* cases in the state be used.

This request was included in the President's FY2023 SAMHSA budget request and the House Labor, HHS appropriations bill (HR 8295). Now as you work to finalize the FY2023 spending bill we urge to you include the following language in final bill:

Provided further, That for purposes of calculating the HIV set-aside under subpart II of Part B of Title XIX, the rate of cases of HIV shall be used instead of the rate of cases of AIDS.

Currently, only four jurisdictions (Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and DC) qualify to use 5 percent of their block grant funding on HIV testing, linkage to care and prevention, and other related services. Next year, if this change is not made, only three jurisdictions would be eligible. With the change to HIV cases, it is estimated that at least 20 states would qualify to use a portion of their funding on HIV-related services.

Both the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and the Housing Opportunities Program for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program have modernized their eligibility determinations to use HIV cases instead of AIDS. This simple change, which would not require any additional funding, would expand HIV services as states and grantees address the opioid epidemic and other substance use treatment and prevention needs. The proposed modernization included in the House appropriations bill aligns with our nation's efforts to end HIV.

We thank you for your continued leadership in ending the HIV epidemic. We believe it is critical that SAMHSA modernize its funding opportunities to accelerate and better align its HIV-related efforts across programs.

Should you have any questions, please contact ABAC co-chairs Carl Schmid at cschmid@hivhep.org, Nick Armstrong at narmstrong@tmail.org, or Emily McCloskey Schreiber at eschreiber@nastad.org

Sincerely,

AIDS ACTION BALTIMORE
 AIDS Alabama
 AIDS Foundation Chicago
 AIDS United
 American Academy of HIV Medicine
 amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
 APLA Health
 Appalachian Learning Initiative Inc
 CAEAR Coalition
 CARES of Southwest Michigan
 Cascade AIDS Project
 Food For Thought
 Georgia AIDS Coalition
 Georgia Equality
 Grady Health System
 HealthHIV
 Hennepin County, Minnesota

HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute
 HIV AIDS Alliance of Michigan
 HIV Dental Alliance
 HIV Medicine Association
 Hope and Help Center of Central Florida, Inc.
 Housing Works, Inc.
 Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.
 Latino Commission on AIDS
 Latinos Salud
 Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
 Los Angeles LGBT Center
 NASTAD
 National Working Positive Coalition
 NMAC

North Carolina AIDS Action Network
PCAF (formerly Pierce County AIDS
Foundation)
PrEP4All
Ryan White Medical Providers Coalition
San Francisco Community Health Center
The AIDS Institute
Treatment Action Group (TAG)
Vivent Health