

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2011

The Honorable Tom Latham
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Olver
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Housing and Urban Development House
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Latham and Ranking Member Olver:

We write to request a funding level of \$362 million for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program for Fiscal Year 2012, a seven percent increase from the FY2010 amount of \$335 million. The HOPWA program, which enjoys wide bipartisan support, is the only federal housing program that specifically provides cities and states with resources to address the housing crisis facing people living with HIV/AIDS. Despite consistent support from the committee and the steady increase in annual appropriations, the growing demand for services under the HOPWA program requires an increase this year.

AIDS housing experts project that half of the 1.1 million people with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. will need some form of housing assistance during the course of their illness. Yet, the HOPWA program currently serves fewer than 60,000 households. To provide housing to another 11,000 households in need, the National AIDS Housing Coalition has recommended an appropriation of \$427 million. In light of budget realities, we are requesting an appropriation of \$362 million, a modest increase over the FY2011 funding level to assist an additional 4,100 households with the greatest need, as well as make several additional jurisdictions eligible for funding.

Homeless and unstably housed HIV-infected people experience higher viral loads and more hospitalizations than those who are stably housed. Inadequate housing is not only a barrier to effective treatment, but also puts people with HIV/AIDS at risk of premature death from exposure to other diseases, poor nutrition, stress, and lack of medical care. Research shows that stable housing prevents new HIV infections, improves HIV health outcomes, reduces mortality, and decreases the use of expensive emergency and hospital services. Housing interventions are critical in our continued fight against HIV/AIDS, and even modest investments in stable housing saves federal and state tax dollars.

HOPWA has provided a national safety net for people battling HIV/AIDS since 1992. At any given time, one-third to one-half of all Americans with HIV/AIDS are either homeless or in imminent danger of losing their homes. HOPWA enables cities and states to design and provide community-based, cost-effective housing for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families with maximum flexibility to meet local needs. In addition, the administrative costs of the program are capped, ensuring the money goes directly to serving people with HIV/AIDS.

HOPWA funds will continue to provide housing assistance across all 50 states, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands through competitive and formula grants. Unfortunately, the demand for housing accommodations greatly outweighs the resources currently available for people living with HIV/AIDS.

HOPWA remains an essential component in the array of programs needed to assure the availability of safe, affordable housing for low-income people with HIV/AIDS. Therefore, we urge the Committee to recommend funding for HOPWA at \$362 million for FY2012 so that we can meet the housing needs of the most vulnerable.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Gerrald Nadler

Josh Long
David Beckstrom

Rosa DeLauro

Walter Diny

Dennis J. Kucinich

Fanny Baldwin

Edwin Binns

Shelley Berkley

Tim

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Mike Ogley

Keith Ekin

Yvette D. Clarke

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Melanie White

Steph J. Lynd

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Raymond Woolsey

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Dawn Lee

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Bob J. Park


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Steve J. Moran Barry Hank

Harold A. Wofford Harold J. Brown

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Danny F. Davis Elliot L. Engel

Charles P. Gosel Kathy Costa

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Members signing the FY2012 letter to Appropriators regarding HOPWA funding

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John Lewis	Pete Stark

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