



March 28, 2022

National AIDS Housing Coalition Statement on President's FY23 Budget Proposal

President Biden's budget, released today, proposes the HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons Living with AIDS) program be funded at \$455 million for fiscal year 2023. This proposal essentially flat-funds the HOPWA program, the only dedicated source of housing funds for people living with HIV/AIDS.

The Biden administration has declared they will end HIV in America, and put forth additional monies for programs that prevent and treat HIV, but they have yet to address one of the cornerstones of health— housing. The administration's proposal last year (which Congress enacted), is resulting in **over \$15 million in losses** for housing programs that provide critical, life-sustaining housing and support for people living with HIV.

"A proposal of only a \$5 million increase for FY23 is a large lesion for the communities who lost federal funding in FY22 and for the 100,000 people living with HIV who are experiencing homelessness" said Lauren Banks, Executive Director of the National AIDS Housing Coalition. "With these funding levels for HOPWA, the Biden administration and Congress have shown they are willing to propose budgets that ensure people living with HIV become and remain homeless."

By proposing that HOPWA be funded at \$455 million for fiscal year 2023, the Biden administration is openly ignoring that in order to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States people living with HIV/AIDS need safe, quality, affordable, and appropriate housing in order to achieve viral suppression.

Persons who are adequately housed achieve viral suppression at rates around 20% higher compared to those who lack stable housing. If the Biden Administration is serious about the targets set in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, funding housing initiatives, and especially the HOPWA program, is imperative to this strategy.

With 1.2M people living with HIV in America, about 30% (~400,000 people) of this population are in need of financial housing assistance, yet the administration is proposing help for about 10% who need it. HUD justifies that this allocation would provide housing for 45,640 low-income people living with HIV. The HIV housing community hopes that Congress rejects this proposal and funds HOPWA at a significantly higher level.

If the Biden administration has another proposal to address the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS, we would welcome such carve-outs for PLWHA in other HUD programs, like the Housing Choice Voucher program. However, without any specific carve-outs for PLWHA, our communities would be subject to the same years-long waiting lists, stigma, and federal restrictions that limit PLWHA from accessing housing in their most vulnerable states. This solution is a poorly conceived trickle-down effect that will not get to the communities that need it the most and does not support the Biden administration's own plan to end HIV in America.

The National AIDS Housing Coalition calls on the Biden Administration and Congress to work with housing advocates to implement a real strategy to ending the HIV epidemic in America by making sure that all people living with HIV have a safe, decent place to call home.

For questions, please contact Lauren Banks, Executive Director of NAHC, at laurenk@nationalaidshousing.org
More information about the National AIDS Housing Coalition can be found at www.nationalaidshousing.org

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