As the HIV epidemic continues to impact the nation’s most vulnerable and underserved communities, Congress must increase its investment in key programs that protect the health and wellbeing of people living with and affected by HIV. Congress must ensure these investments are actualized, reject attacks on existing programs that have historically provided critical support to people living with HIV, and promote laws and policies that support community-led efforts to end the HIV epidemic in the United States.

**BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS**

To effectively end the HIV epidemic, Congress must appropriate significant financial investment into programs that support people living with HIV. Congress must pass a budget that reflects the intersecting public health issues facing our communities and that rejects proposed cuts to key programs in the President’s budget. Congress should:

- **Increase funding for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program.** The Ryan White Program is the only federal safety net program designed specifically for people living with HIV and has seen remarkable success in improving linkage to and retention in HIV care.

- **Increase funding for the Housing Opportunities for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) program.** HOPWA remains the only dedicated federal housing assistance program for people living with HIV. The president has proposed to cut $80 million in funding for this program.

- **Increase funding for the Minority HIV/AIDS Fund (formerly the Secretary’s Minority AIDS Initiative Fund).** This Fund supports novel and innovative programs designed to connect federal, state, and community efforts to respond to the HIV epidemic.

- **Increase funding for the CDC’s Division of STD Prevention to combat the rising rate of STDs,** which can have serious health consequences if left undiagnosed and untreated, including increased risk of HIV transmission.

- **Dedicate federal HIV funding for the Indian Health Service’s Ending the HIV Epidemic initiatives to ensure support and care for American Indian and Alaska Native communities impacted by HIV.**

- **Pass appropriations legislation that removes restrictions on federal funding for syringe services programs,** which prevent overdose deaths and transmission of infectious diseases like HIV and hepatitis C.

**ACCESS TO CARE**

Health care remains an essential component of ending the epidemic. We need policies that secure access to antiretroviral therapy, that secure access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and that address the social determinants of health and the multi-faceted barriers that impact health and wellbeing. Specifically, Congress should:

- **Support increased investment in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program,** which has expanded access to care and improved outcomes for people living with HIV, including key subpopulations.

- **Ensure all forms of health insurance cover the full range of antiretroviral therapy,** including coverage provided by Medicaid and Medicare or through the Marketplace.
**LEGISLATIVE ASKS**

- **Expand awareness of and access to PrEP** by co-sponsoring bills such as the PrEP Access and Coverage Act.
- **Ensure that no-cost coverage of PrEP includes associated laboratory tests and clinical visits** which will otherwise restrict access to care.
- **Legislate to support innovative care models that address the social determinants of health** by integrating interventions such as housing, food and nutrition, employment, and transportation into health care delivery and finance systems.

**CIVIL RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Violations of civil rights and human rights threaten to exacerbate existing disparities in the HIV epidemic. The federal government plays an essential role in combatting bigotry and discrimination. To move toward achieving equality and social justice in America, Congress should:

- **Support the repeal of state HIV criminalization laws**, in order to reduce transmission and stop the targeting of people based on a stigmatized health condition.
- **Protect the privacy of people living with HIV** by protecting against misuse of molecular HIV surveillance data.
- **Reform the adult and juvenile criminal justice system** by building upon the First Step Act and passing meaningful sentencing reform, phasing out the use of private, for-profit prisons, and eliminating racialized risk assessment.
- **Pass the For the People Act of 2019** to support comprehensive campaign finance reform and to protect and ensure voting rights.
- **Enact comprehensive immigration reform that protects due process of law and ensures access to health care** for immigrants, particularly anyone detained by law enforcement or immigration authority.
- **Support the collection of sexual orientation and gender identity data** that would enable federal agencies to better serve LGBTQ+ people and direct all federal agencies that provide services to transgender people to produce annual reports with substantial behavioral or surveillance data specifically focused on the transgender community.
- **Pass the Equality Act**, which would enact explicit non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people in key areas of life, including employment, housing, and public services.
- **Lead a congressional hearing and report about the increased violence against Black transgender women**, with a focus on community-based alternatives to preventing harm and violence that do not increase criminalization or incarceration.
- **Use congressional oversight to oppose the continued attacks on transgender rights seen in recent rulemaking**, including proposed changes to health care non-discrimination regulations and to non-discrimination protections in shelters and housing facilities.
- **Enact legislation to allow a gender-neutral option on all federally issued identification** and encourage states to allow a gender-neutral option and name or gender marker changes on state-issued identification.
- **Support the full implementation and enforcement of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act**, ensuring that federally funded HIV programs are accessible to people with disabilities.
SEXUAL WELLNESS THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN

People of all ages deserve sexual health information that promotes their health and well-being throughout their lives. Information should be comprehensive, including information about preventing HIV, other sexually transmitted infections, and unintended pregnancy. To address this need, Congress should:

- **Support adolescent sexual health promotion programs**, including the Personal Responsibility Education Program, the CDC Adolescent and School Health Program, and the Office of Adolescent Health’s Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program, which prioritize evidence-based, medically accurate interventions.

- **Co-sponsor the Real Education for Health Youth Act and the Youth Access to Sexual Health Services Act**, which would support new initiatives for adolescents and young people, enable LGBTQ+-inclusive education, and provide grants to increase and improve the linkage and access of marginalized young people to sexual and reproductive health care and related services.

- **Eliminate Federal Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage programs**, which prohibit teaching the benefits of condoms and contraception and fail to address the needs of young people who are already sexually active, survivors of sexual abuse, and the LGBTQ+ community.

- **Support the reversal of the Title X gag rule**, which prevents access to critical providers and further exacerbates existing disparities in care and treatment.

- **Designate people living with HIV as a “greatest social need” population in the Older Americans Act**, which would open access to crucial services like meals, job training, senior centers, health promotion, benefits enrollment, and more for people aging with HIV.