

March 23, 2017

Colleagues,

Senators Durbin and Gillibrand would like to invite your bosses to join them in requesting \$350 million in funding for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program in the FY18 THUD appropriations bill. Text of the letter is below.

If you have any questions or if your boss would like to sign on or if you have any questions, please reach out to [Lakecia\\_foster@durbin.senate.gov](mailto:Lakecia_foster@durbin.senate.gov) (4-1395) or [Denzel\\_singletary@gillibrand.senate.gov](mailto:Denzel_singletary@gillibrand.senate.gov) (4-1476).

**The deadline to sign on is Friday, March 31.**

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing  
and Urban Development  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing  
and Urban Development  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Collins:

We write to request that you include \$350 million in funding for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program in the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. This request includes funds to maintain level funding for the HOPWA basic formula allocation, as well as additional funding to support the recent modernization of the formula that was enacted under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) to reflect the current nature and distribution of this epidemic across the country.

Established in 1992, HOPWA is the sole federal housing program dedicated to ensuring states and municipalities can adequately address the needs of their residents living with HIV/AIDS, with nearly half of all these individuals requiring some form of housing-related assistance. Despite the rapid rate of groundbreaking research and new, life-saving treatments that make living a long and healthy life with HIV/AIDS possible, these advances prove expensive for so many. No American should have to choose between essential medical care and treatment or housing for themselves and their families; HOPWA plays a vital role in ensuring that impossible decision will ever need to be made.

More than 1.2 million people in the United States today are living with HIV infection, with more than 39,000 new infections each year. We know that this disease does not affect all Americans equally, making the need for HOPWA in certain communities all the more important. Ninety-five percent of HOPWA funds serve extremely-low to very-low-income households. During the last program year, eleven percent of HOPWA beneficiaries were veterans and another 56 percent were considered chronically homeless.

Research has proven the connection between stable housing and individual health outcomes for those living with HIV/AIDS. Some 95 percent of HOPWA recipients were able to achieve housing stability thanks to these funds. Housing assistance has been demonstrated to reduce the chance of transmission of the disease due to access and adherence to medical treatment, and the reliance on expensive crisis services like emergency rooms and nursing home care is greatly reduced, saving countless life years. Moreover, one prevented infection saves more than \$400,000 in lifetime medical costs. Therefore, our investment in these critical services is more than worth it.

HOPWA has been a critical tool in the lives of so many Americans in their fight against HIV/AIDS. We urge you to fund HOPWA at \$350 million for FY 2018. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,