



June 18, 2009

Senator Daniel K. Inouye
Chair, Appropriations Committee
722 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Thad Cochran
Vice Chair, Appropriations Committee
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative David Obey
Chair, Appropriations Committee
2314 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
2112 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Inouye and Cochran and Representatives Obey and Lewis:

On behalf of the HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York, I write to thank you for de-funding community-based abstinence education. I am delighted with your decision to provide realistic, honest, specific information for young people in this country. At the same time as I applaud you for shifting from a focus on abstinence-only education, I want to express disappointment with the small increase in HIV/AIDS funding in the budget. The FY 2009 final budget allocated \$2,238.4 million for Ryan White Programs total and \$663.1 million for Part A programs. The FY 2010 President's Budget Request allocates \$2,292.4 million for Ryan White Programs total and \$671.1 million for Part A programs. The increase for Ryan White Programs total from FY 2009 to FY 2010 is only \$54 million, and the increase for Part A programs is only \$8 million.

The HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York is a federally-mandated community planning body charged with allocating and distributing approximately \$100 million in Part A funds from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for treatment and care for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the New York Eligible Metropolitan Area. The Planning Council is comprised of physicians, service providers,

advocates, and PLWHA, all of whom are very knowledgeable about the complex mixture of medical and social services needed by the consumers.

As you know, the CDC in 2008 revised its estimate of the number of new HIV infections per year from 40,000 to roughly 56,300 (approximately 40% higher). New York continues to be the epicenter of the epidemic: as of December 31, 2007 (the most recent year for which complete data are available), a total of 102,404 PLWHA were living in New York City. The small increase in funding allocated for their care in the federal budget is not sufficient to address their needs.

I very much hope that you will remedy this situation by adjusting the allocation of funding for treatment and care this year. If the time for adjustments to the FY 2010 budget has passed, I hope that you will reconsider the amount allocated next year.

Thank you very much in advance for all you have done and will continue to do for people living with HIV/AIDS.

All best wishes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Soraya Elcock". The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Soraya Elcock
Community Co-Chair
HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York