

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services and Education
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services and Education
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Colleague:

As you develop the FY'24 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, **we urge you to provide \$312.5 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent and control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and \$200,000,000 at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for Clinical Services.**

According to the CDC's latest estimates, 68 million Americans - approximately one in five - had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) on any given day in 2018, resulting in a financial toll of \$16 billion in direct medical costs. U.S. cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis hit an all-time high, with a yearly increase of 2.5 million cases. The cases of congenital syphilis have increased 235% since 2016, with deaths increasing 210% over that time period. Without treatment, STIs can have serious health consequences, including cervical cancer, ectopic pregnancy, pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and increased risk of acquiring and transmitting human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

STIs disproportionately impact ethnic and racial minority groups, gay and bisexual men, and young people. In 2019, STD rates for African Americans were five to eight times that of non-Hispanic White people, and gay and bisexual men made up almost half of all primary and secondary syphilis cases. Additionally, 61 percent of chlamydia cases occurred in young people aged 15 to 24 years old. Additional funding for STI prevention, testing, and treatment can help reduce these disparities.

The COVID-19 and mpox outbreaks had a significant impact on STI prevention efforts. During the pandemic response, 78 percent of the STD/HIV health department workforce were redeployed to COVID-19 emergency response, including a large portion of the disease intervention specialists (DIS)/contact tracers who were tracking STIs. The disruptions to STI prevention efforts had a direct correlation to the increase in STI rates. The response to the pandemic and mpox clearly shows that a significant investment must be made to combat more than one infectious disease at a time.

Therefore, our request of \$312.5 million at the CDC will help rebuild State and local health departments to increase capacity, address understaffing, and DIS training. Included in this request is \$15 million, the second installment of a three-year effort begun in FY'23, to move the

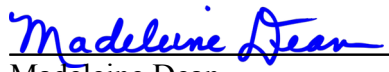
grant year one month each year, from the current January grant application deadline to March. This will lessen the paperwork burden on State health departments and ensure a more efficient use of funds, when the appropriations are enacted later in the year; and \$3,000,000 to ensure that none of the grantees receives less than the amount received in FY'23.


The STI clinical services request of \$200 million for a HRSA demonstration project to support grants and contracts to public and private nonprofit STI clinics for staff training as well as expand capacity to address shortages in STI clinical services. Testing and prompt treatment of STIs are the best tools to reduce STI rates but currently there is no dedicated federal program to support high-quality and accessible STI clinical services. This demonstration project will provide long overdue support for patients seeking care.


Stemming the tide of STIs across the nation requires a strong federal investment and commitment to ensure the health of all our communities.


Thank you for your continued support of STD prevention and control. We greatly appreciate your leadership and consideration of these request.


Sincerely,



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress


David Scott
Member of Congress


Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

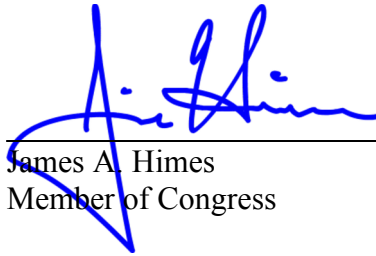

Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress


Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

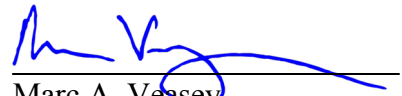

Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



James A. Himes
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



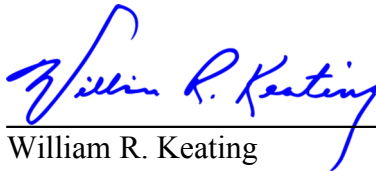
Troy Carter
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



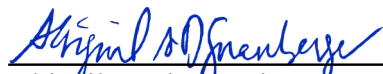
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



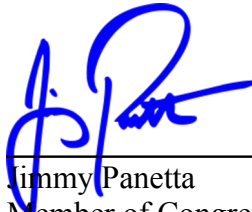
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress