October 4, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: FY23 CDC Infectious Diseases and the Opioid Epidemic Program Funding Request

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Members Blunt and Cole:

The undersigned 364 public health, harm reduction, HIV, hepatitis, criminal justice reform, and community-based organizations covering all 50 states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico, urge Congress to respond to the dramatic and ongoing overdose crisis by providing $43 million (a $25 million increase) for the CDC's Infectious Diseases and Opioid Epidemic program in the final FY23 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) appropriations bill. Increased funding would support and expand access to overdose prevention and syringe services programs (SSPs), including access to naloxone, to help stem the dramatic and enduring increases in overdose deaths. Additionally, we urge you to end the ban on the use of federal funding for syringes and to prevent the inclusion of additional new riders in the final spending bill that would limit syringe services and overdose prevention programs in their activities to reduce the spread of infectious diseases and other harmful impacts of drug use, including overdose, by providing access to smoking equipment with non-federal funds.

The United States is experiencing an ongoing drug overdose crisis that continues to worsen, with a record 108,000 predicted overdose deaths. This is an astonishing increase of 57% in just three years. Expanding services to people who use drugs to prevent overdose is an essential step to reducing the high rate of overdose occurring in communities nationwide. While there has been increased funding for drug prevention and treatment services, there is a lack of access to overdose prevention and other strategies for reducing harm, such as syringe services programs (SSPs). SSPs have the knowledge, contacts, and ability to successfully engage people who use drugs and gain trust. They provide naloxone and other overdose prevention resources, and they connect people to medical care and support, including mental health and substance use disorder treatment and peer and recovery support. A study from Massachusetts found that the opioid overdose mortality rate was cut almost in half with substantially increased access to naloxone.

With additional resources, SSPs could increase ready access to naloxone to save lives.
While there has been a worsening of overdose deaths nationwide, overdoses have increased more dramatically among Black people and communities of color. Since 2015, overdose deaths have been rising most rapidly among Black and Hispanic communities. In 2020, Black people had the largest increase in overdose mortality of 48.8%, while the Hispanic community experienced a 40.1% increase compared to White people who experienced a 26.3% increase. American Indians and Alaska Natives experienced the highest rate of overdose mortality of all ethnic groups, 30.8% higher than that of white people.

Finally, expanding access to SSPs will reduce health care costs, including for infectious diseases treatment. The rise in injection drug use associated with opioid use disorder over the past decade is largely responsible for the 380% increase in hepatitis C cases and has been the cause of HIV outbreaks in communities across the nation. Hepatitis C treatment can cost more than $30,000 per person, while HIV treatment can cost upwards of $560,000 per person. Averting even a small number of cases has the potential to save millions in treatment costs in a single year.

To help the nation respond to this urgent overdose crisis, we urge Congress to provide $43 million in funding for the CDC’s Infectious Diseases and Opioid Epidemic program in the final FY23 LHHS spending bill and to remove riders banning the use of federal funding for syringes or preventing providers from providing smoking equipment with non-federal funds.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical request. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact William McColl, senior consultant with Collier Collective at bmccoll@colliercollective.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing) (CA)
AIDS United (DC)
AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC) (NY)
African American Health Alliance (MD)
American Academy of HIV Medicine (DC)
American Atheists (NJ)
American Liver Foundation (NJ)
American Medical Women's Association (IL)
American Society of Addiction Medicine (MD)
Association For Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare (TX)
Association for Multidisciplinary Education and Research in Substance Use and Addiction (AMERSA) (RI)
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) (DC)
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (DC)
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (DC)
Big Cities Health Coalition (MD)
Black AIDS Institute (CA)
Blacks in Law Enforcement of America (DC)
Boulder Care (OR)
Center for Popular Democracy Action (NY)
Center for Disability Rights (NY)
Center for LGBTQ Economic Advancement & Research (CLEAR) (CA)
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers (FL)
Clary Strategies (CA)
Coalition on Positive Health Empowerment (NY)
Community Catalyst (MA)
Community Liver Alliance (PA)
CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants) (DC)
StoptheDrugWar.org (DC)
Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW), University of Arizona (AZ)
SWOP (Sex Worker Outreach Project) Behind Bars (FL)
The 6:52 Project Foundation (AL)
The AIDS Institute (DC)
The "Sankofa" HIV Initiative (OH)
The Sidewalk Project (CA)
Trans Research and Resource Solutions Center (IN)
Transitions Clinic Network (CA)
Treatment Action Group (NY)
Treatment Communities of America (DC)
Truth Pharm (NY)
U.S. People Living with HIV Caucus (MD)
Vital Strategies (NY)
Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) (DC)
Yale Program in Addiction Medicine (CT)

State and Local Organizations

Alabama

AIDS Alabama
AIDS Alabama South
Alabama Justice Initiative
Clinic652
Five Horizons Health Services
GoodWorks: North Alabama Harm Reduction
Medical Advocacy & Outreach (MAOI)
THRIVE Alabama

Alaska

Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association

Arizona

Aunt Rita's Foundation
Southwest Recovery Alliance

Arkansas

Central Arkansas Harm Reduction

California

Any Positive Change
APLA Health
Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP)
Asian Liver Center, Stanford University School of Medicine
Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom (BALIF)
Being Alive - LA
Bienestar Human Services
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals
Christie's Place
CLARE | Matrix
CORE Medical Clinic, Inc.
DAP Health
Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
End Hep C SF
Face to Face
GLIDE
Harm Reduction Coalition of Santa Cruz County
Harm Reduction Services (Sacramento)
HealthRIGHT 360
HIV Education and Prevention Project of Alameda County (HEPPAC)
Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction
Los Angeles LGBT Center
MCAVHN Care and Prevention Network
Northern Valley Harm Reduction Coalition (NVHRC)
Oasis Legal Services
Public Safety, San Luis Obispo
Radiant Health Centers
Safer Alternatives thru Networking & Education (SANE)
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
San Francisco Hepatitis C Task Force
SLO Bangers Syringe Exchange and Overdose Prevention Program
The Gubbio Project
The Honest Demons Club
The Spahr Center
The Wall Las Memorias
The Wildflower Collective
To Restore Unite Support and Transform
Transgender Law Center

Colorado

Boulder County AIDS Project (BCAP)
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
Harm Reduction Action Center (HRAC)
High Rockies Harm Reduction (HRHR)
One Colorado
Southern Colorado Harm Reduction Association
Vivent Health
Young People in Recovery

Connecticut

Alliance for Living
Connecticut Harm Reduction Alliance

Delaware

Delaware HIV Consortium
Remedy Alliance

District of Columbia
Family and Medical Counseling Service, Inc.
Harm Reduction Experts Improving Lives (HIPS)
Rebuilding Independence My Style
Voice For A Second Chance
Harm Reduction at Westminster

Florida

Florida Harm Reduction Collective
Hope and Help Center of Central Florida
NEU Health Solutions, Inc.
Zero Hour Life Center

Georgia

Georgia AIDS Coalition
Georgia Equality
Georgia Overdose Prevention
Just Love More, Inc.

Hawaii

Drug Policy Forum of Hawaii
Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center
Hep Free Hawaii
Kaipuokauloku

Idaho

North Idaho AIDS Coalition (NIAC)

Illinois

Above and Beyond Family Recovery Center
AIDS Foundation Chicago
Center for Housing & Health
GRASP - Broken No More
Heartland Alliance
Howard Brown Health
Illinois Alliance for Reentry & Justice
Illinois Harm Reduction and Recovery Coalition
JOLT Foundation
Phoenix Center
QC Harm Reduction
SisterReach
The Night Ministry
The Perfectly Flawed Foundation
The Porchlight Collective SAP
The Puerto Rico Project
Thresholds
West Side Heroin/Opioid Task Force Prevention Partnership, Inc.
Indiana

A Better Life Brianna’s Hope
Aspire Indiana Health
Beyond the Pod
Community AIDS Action Group of South Central Indiana
Connection Cafe (Fayette County Harm Reduction Alliance)
Foundations Family Medicine
Granny Connection
HIV Modernization Movement-Indiana
Holding Space Recovery Project
Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition
Indiana Recovery Alliance
Mental Health America of Indiana
Refresh (F5)
Scott County THRIVE
Women in Motion

Iowa

Iowa Harm Reduction Coalition (IHRC)
Iowa Student Harm Reduction Alliance

Kansas

DCCCA

Kentucky

Kentucky Harm Reduction Coalition

Louisiana

Capitol Area Reentry Program Inc.
CrescentCare

Maine

Amistad
Health Equity Alliance
Maine Access Points
Maine People's Alliance
Needlepoint Sanctuary of Maine

Maryland

Addiction Connections Resource
Advocacy and Training Center (Cumberland)
Baltimore Harm Reduction Coalition
Maryland Communities United
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - Maryland Chapter (NCADD-MD)
Voices of Hope, Inc.
Massachusetts

Fenway Health
Law Office of Lisa Newman-Polk
Material Aid and Advocacy Program
Tapestry Health Systems

Michigan

217 Recovery
ACCESS
Community Outreach Prevention and Education Network (COPE Network)
Flint Rising
Harm Reduction Michigan
HIV AIDS Alliance of Michigan
Lansing Area AIDS Network (LAAN)
Punks With Lunch Lansing
UNIFIED - HIV Health and Beyond
Wellness Services, Inc.

Minnesota

Hope House of St. Croix Valley
Harm Reduction Sisters
Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly
Minnesota people of color LGBTQ pride
Native American Community Clinic
Rainbow Health
Rural AIDS Action Network (RAAN)
Southside Harm Reduction Services
University of Minnesota Youth and AIDS Projects

Mississippi

End It For Good
Vivent Health

Missouri

Addiction Science Unit, Missouri Institute of Mental Health, University of Missouri
The Missouri Network For Opiate Reform and Recovery

Montana

Open Aid Alliance

Nebraska

Nebraska AIDS Project

Nevada

Trac-B Exchange
New Hampshire

Better Life Partners  
HIV/HCV Resource Center  
New Hampshire Harm Reduction Coalition

New Jersey

Black Lives Matter Paterson  
New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition  
New Jersey Policy Perspective  
South Jersey AIDS Alliance (SJAA)

New Mexico

Casa de Salud  
Law Enforcement Training International  
The Mountain Center  
Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico

New York

A Little Piece of Light  
Alliance for Positive Change  
Black Harm Reduction Network  
Bronx Móvil  
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center  
Center for Motivation and Change  
College and Community Fellowship  
Community Action for Social Justice (CASJ)  
Ed for All  
Elmcor  
Exponents, Inc.  
Harlem United Syringe Exchange Program  
Harm Reduction Caucus at Columbia School of Social Work  
Housing Works, Inc. (HRS)  
Michael Galipeau Consulting  
NAMI Huntington  
New York Transgender Advocacy Group  
PrEP4All  
RAW- Recovery All Ways  
Second Chance Opportunities  
Southern Tier AIDS Program  
St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction  
TCC Group  
WCJA

North Carolina

Advocacy House  
Benevolence Farm  
ekiM for Change
Fruit of Labor Action Research & Technical Assistance, LLC
Holler Harm Reduction
North Carolina AIDS Action Network
North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition
Smoky Mountain Harm Reduction
Twin City Harm Reduction Collective
Western North Carolina AIDS Project (WNCAP)
Wilkes Recovery Revolution, Inc.

North Dakota

Fargo Cass Public Health
Grand Forks Public Health

Ohio

Caracole
River Valley Organizing
Showing Up for Racial Justice Ohio
Thrive Peer Recovery Services
Writers in Residence

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Harm Reduction Alliance

Oregon

Caring Ambassadors Program
HIV Alliance

Pennsylvania

Black and Latinx Community Control Philadelphia
Daniel J. Orens Foundation, Inc.
Family Service Association of Bucks County
Friends of POPN
Friends of Safehouse
March Fo(u)rth Consulting
Operation in My Back Yard
PA Harm Reduction Network
Pathways to Housing PA
Pennsylvania Harm Reduction Network
Philadelphia Housing Action
Philadelphia Overdose Prevention Network
Prevention Point Pittsburgh
Reclaim Philadelphia
SELF Inc.
Why Not Prosper

Puerto Rico

Coalición de Coaliciones Pro Personas sin Hogar de PR, Inc.
El Punto en la Montaña, Inc  
Hermanxs de la Calle / Boutique Comunitaria por Urbe Apie  
Intercambios Puerto Rico, Inc.  
Pacientes de SIDA Pro Política Sana

**Rhode Island**

Project Weber/RENEW  
RI Communities for Addiction Recovery Efforts (RICARES)

**South Carolina**

Challenges Inc  
PALSS, inc.

**South Dakota**

South Dakota Urban Indian Health  
South Dakota Association of Addiction & Prevention Professionals (SDAAPP)

**Tennessee**

A Betor Way  
LIFEline to Success  
SisterReach  
Street Works

**Texas**

Legacy Community Health Services, Inc.  
Lets Grow Beautifully Together Qmunity Center  
Prism Health North Texas  
Texas Harm Reduction Alliance (THRA)  
Vivent Health

**Utah**

ONE VOICE Recovery, Inc.  
Utahns Against Hunger

**Vermont**

AIDS Project of Southern Vermont  
Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform

**Virginia**

Virginia Rural Health Association (VRHA)

**Washington**

Blue Mountain Heart To Heart  
Conspiracy of Geniuses
Cowlitz Family Health Center Harm Reduction Program
Dave Purchase Project
Public Health - Seattle & King County
The People's Harm Reduction Alliance
Voices of Community Activists and Leaders, Washington (VOCAL-WA)

**West Virginia**

Milan Puskar Health Right
West Virginia Hepatitis Academic Mentoring Partnership (WVHAMP)
WV Citizen Action Group

**Wisconsin**

Community Advocates, Inc.
Vivent Health

**Wyoming**

Recover Wyoming