



State of New York
Department of Health
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ANTONIA C. NOVELLO, M.D., M.P.H., Dr. P.H.
Commissioner

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February 15, 2005

The Honorable Michael Leavitt
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

I am writing in support of the Ryan White CARE Act Title I grant application for the New York Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) for FY 2005. While I understand the fiscal year 2005 federal appropriation for Title I of the Ryan White CARE Act is level funded, I respectfully request that the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) provide the New York EMA with the full amount requested in the grant application.

In 2003, the New York EMA sustained a nationally unprecedented cut of \$13.9 million below its 2002 grant allotment. In 2004, this funding was restored. An increase in funds is required in 2005 to address the complex needs of increasing numbers of people living with HIV and AIDS in New York City.

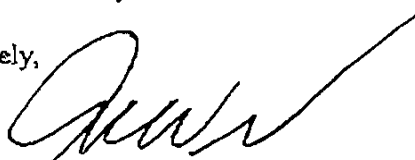
New York City remains the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic nationally, with almost 89,000 New Yorkers diagnosed and known to be living with HIV or AIDS and at least an estimated 25,000 additional people living with HIV, but not yet diagnosed. In 2003 alone, the number of new HIV/AIDS cases reported was 4,086, which surpasses the total number of people living with AIDS in many U.S. cities. New York City bears a markedly disproportionate share of the epidemic as compared with its share of the U.S. population. With less than three percent of the U.S. population, the New York EMA has almost 16 percent of people living with AIDS.

In addition, the Centers for Disease Control initiative, "Advancing HIV Prevention: New Strategies for a Changing Epidemic," which will help HIV-infected individuals learn their status, will increase the demand for HIV-related care.

Further, New York's epidemic is extremely complex. People living with HIV/AIDS in New York City are primarily traditionally marginalized populations, many live in extreme poverty, and a large percentage have co-morbidities, such as serious mental health problems, intravenous drug use, and other sexually transmitted diseases. Among people living with HIV/AIDS in New York City, 77 percent are people of color, 73 percent of the recently diagnosed have annual incomes under \$10,000, and fewer than ten percent have private health insurance.

Cutting Title I funding in New York City at a time when the number of individuals with complex needs is rapidly increasing would be disastrous. Therefore, on behalf of the New York EMA, I am requesting that the Health Resources and Services Administration provide the New York EMA with the highest possible allocation of essential Ryan White Title I funding.

Sincerely,



Antonia C. Novello, M.D., M.P.H., Dr. P.H.
Commissioner of Health

cc: Carol Thompson, Director
White House Office of National AIDS Policy

Christopher Bates, Acting Director
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of AIDS Policy

Elizabeth Duke, Ph.D., Administrator
Health Resources and Services Administration

Deborah Parham, Ph.D., Associate Administrator
HIV/AIDS Bureau, HRSA

Guthrie S. Birkhead, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, AIDS Institute
New York State Department of Health

The Honorable Michael Bloomberg, Mayor
New York City

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene