



18 August 2009

Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Schumer:

I am writing as the Community Co-Chair of the HIV Health and Human Services Planning Council of New York. We are responsible for planning, evaluating and allocating resources for the City of New York and Westchester, Putnam and Rockland Counties. Tens of thousands of New Yorkers living with HIV our region receive HIV treatment and care through the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act. The Planning Council is comprised of community health care workers, medical experts and dedicated, concerned individuals who volunteer their time and skills to insure that funding and services are targeted to the areas of greatest need in a manner which is fiscally responsible. Our membership is reflective of the region, very diverse in all aspects.

On behalf of the clients, agencies who provide services, HIV administration and planning staff, and persons who volunteer for the Planning Council, I write to request a swift extension of the current Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act, which is set to expire on September 30, 2009.

The Ryan White Program plays a pivotal role in providing people living with HIV and AIDS with the care and treatment they need and deserve. Our region receives approximately \$102 million Part A funds and \$9 million in MAI funds per year from the Ryan White legislation to serve clients who receive life-saving medications and critical care. These funds support a wide range of necessary medical and support services.

We are greatly alarmed that with the September 30th deadline looming, no action has been taken by Congress to extend the Ryan White legislation and ensure that our programs do not experience service disruptions. If the legislation is not approved, the need for care and medical treatment for these clients will not go away. HIV+ persons will still need these services, which most would need to obtain through the public hospitals and emergency rooms or possibly not at all. The cost

for providing HIV care from these strained systems would be considerably higher than through the efficient programs we coordinate in the region.

On behalf of HIV Planning Council and region, and those we serve, I ask that you urge your colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to act immediately to extend the Ryan White legislation for three more years with the recommended changes in the Community Consensus Document (enclosed) which has been endorsed by over 270 organizations across the country.

I thank you in advance for doing everything you can to safeguard Ryan White funds for our region. Please feel free to contact me regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Soraya Elcock". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

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

Encl: Ryan White Extension Community Consensus Document