Letters—June 2011

May 2, 2011

The Real Death Panels

In "For Cryin' Out Loud" (March 2011), Mark Leydorf reports that HIV advocates in Ohio—home of U.S. Speaker of the House John Boehner—are fighting to save the state's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) and the lives of people living with HIV.

Leydorf might make note that Obama's 700-mile-per-hour spending has put our national economy and stability of the dollar at great risk. We cannot tax or print enough money to take care of all Americans on Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, education and hundreds of [other] programs. Short of budget cuts, the only solution Leydorf leaves politicians is to enslave the producers of society to crushing tax burdens thus destroying economic growth. Medical innovation will be stifled. Such a prescription helps nobody, including those with HIV.

S. Crowe
Houston

The much-touted and feared death panels have arrived. I cannot fathom anyone making the decision to deny life-sustaining meds for one person, let alone for 1,000. Perhaps some of our decision makers need a course in HIV 101. Or maybe they just have their heads in the sand. When I told a family member in Ohio about the ADAP cutbacks and explained that recipients will die without their meds, I was met with silence. Silence=Death.

Jeff
Brooklyn

Boehner is the typical Republican! He cries about his issues and does not empathize with others. When the [memorial service] for the people killed and injured in [the mass shooting near Tucson] occurred on January 12, Boehner was [hosting a cocktail party for the Republican National Committee]. One should not expect him or the Republican Party to have concern for people with HIV! Stop deluding yourselves.

Dave
City Withheld

Deadly Cuts

On February 14, we reported on U.S. House Republicans' proposed cuts to HIV/AIDS programs both at home and abroad, which include reductions to ADAP, research funding to the National Institutes of Health, and HIV humanitarian contributions to developing nations. Here's what you had to say:

Cutting funding for ADAP will cost billions in increased costs for hospitalizations and lost productivity. We need Congress to invest more money in this vital program, not less. Congress should follow [President] Obama's lead and make budget cuts with a scalpel, rather than with an ax.

Karen Bates
Columbia, SC

[Not only will AIDS budget cuts increase] long-term medical costs, but the infection rate will rise as well from decreased prevention research (vaccines, microbicides, etc.) and untreated people with high viral loads. These shortsighted policies will lead to higher costs. The Republicans are deficit hypocrites. POZ needs to lead the charge in 2012 to vote out anyone who votes against us.

John
Washington, DC

Let's Talk About Sex

"Sex and the Salon" (March 2011) demonstrates how L'Oréal's hairdressers are lowering HIV rates by discussing the virus with their clients in the salon.

Kudos to L'Oréal for taking action. It says volumes about the management and their willingness to take risks. The article comments that "after all, stigma and discrimination still abound regarding HIV." These informal chats between hairdressers and clients will help everyone become more educated about HIV/AIDS.

Don
Atlanta

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Letters-JUNE11-HIV-20352-9839