CARES Act Becomes Law

This $2 trillion package, while substantial, won't be enough.

April 2, 2020 By Paul Kawata

This guest post is by Joe Huang-Racalto, director of NMAC government relations and public policy.

The historic economic devastation caused by the COVID19 pandemic required swift and profound action by Congress. The House passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which will provide immediate relief for most Americans and for our health infrastructure.

While the CARES Act provided $90 million for Ryan White Care and $65 million for HOWPA; perhaps the most significant relief will be the $100 billion in direct aid to healthcare institutions, including Medicare and Medicaid enrolled providers. It's worth noting that NMAC was proud to have joined with our partners, and worked with Congress to ensure HIV/AIDS related funding was not only reprogrammed, but more importantly, we successfully advocated for increased funding in these health accounts.

This $2 trillion package, while substantial, won't be enough. I recognize many of you may disagree – but please try to understand, we don't yet know the long-term ramifications COVID-19 will have on our economy — or more importantly — our health and lives. While the CARES Act will most certainly aid in the current recovery, we must not be reactive to an unknown future. Those of us who fight for funding for HIV/AIDS, STI's, and minority health initiatives, know that the best response to any public health issue, is to be proactive. The same is true for the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Director of Government Relations and Public Policy (GRPP) for NMAC, you have my word that will continue to work with this Administration and Congress as Phase IV of this recovery is being developed.

Also, in an effort to help each of you during these unchartered times, the GRPP Department at NMAC will be scheduling Webinars to help train our local NGO partners with applying for small business loans through the Small Business Administration's website. In addition, we will be building out NMAC's website to include a GRPP section. There, you will be able to keep up to date on our efforts, as well as learn how you can help us advocate for increased funding as Congress looks to draft a Phase IV response.

Finally, as we enter another difficult week, I'm reminded of the words of Henry Ford: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." Please

continue to follow the guidance of Dr. Fauci and your local officials.

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