Congress Members Request Review of HIV Drug Patent Process

Plus: Tell your representatives to support the PrEP Access and Coverage Act. Here's how.

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Last week, a bicameral collection of congressional lawmakers raised questions about the HIV prevention drug patent process. In an oversight letter led by Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12), the group called on the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to thoroughly review the way by which Gilead Sciences developed its pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) drug, Descovy. The lawmakers also raised concerns around Gilead's request for a patent extension on Descovy.

For those who are closely following the HIV policy landscape in Washington—and even for those who are not—this is a critical development worth reading about. You can view the full letter here.

AIDS United has always been appreciative of the oversight role that our federal lawmakers play on healthcare. Our expectation is that USPTO will conduct a thorough and appropriate review of the Descovy patent, and we look forward to seeing the agency's results.

Additionally, AIDS United continues to support affordable access to the most expansive HIV prevention tools, including PrEP. Getting PrEP into the hands of those who want or could benefit from it—regardless of whether they can afford it—is among the most pressing of our many policy and advocacy priorities. We are clear that drug prices are an issue for the HIV field for both prevention and treatment, and we appreciate the activism that focuses on ensuring universal access to HIV medications.

As a part of AIDS United's ongoing efforts to ensure access to PrEP for all of those who want and need it, we encourage members of Congress and the HIV community to support the PrEP Access and Coverage Act. This legislation, which was sponsored by Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA) & Representative Adam Schiff (D-CA-28), was crafted with significant input from HIV advocacy groups, including AIDS United, to help us to achieve the goals of affordable and universal access to PrEP. To tell your representatives in Washington to support the PrEP Access and Coverage Act, click here.

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