



Texas Has Learned from Florida: Canceled Meetings Equal Cut HIV Funding

Texas' Medication Advisory Committee just canceled its quarterly meeting. We're ringing the alarm because Florida has taught us what happens next.

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In January, HIV advocates started ringing the alarm against Florida's plan to cut its AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) funding. But by the time they sprang into action, the damage had already been done: After June 30, over 11,000 people living with HIV will lose access to their life-saving medications.

Frighteningly, we're seeing the same slippery slope towards cutting HIV services in Texas.

On April 8, Texas' HIV Medication Advisory Committee (MAC) canceled its quarterly meeting without any warning. Instead moving the meeting to a sensible date, they've rescheduled it for July: 100 days from now. As Florida taught us, one minute they're canceling meetings, the next, they're canceling HIV funding.

Instead of waiting for a gradual progression toward death, the [Texas Strike Force](#) is demanding accountability from Texas' Department of State Health Services (DSHS). We're not asking for any favors. We just want MAC's staff to do their jobs: Hold their scheduled meetings every quarter so that the public can make comments and express their concerns. And so that MAC can let us know what's happening with the ADAP budget.

People are already on edge about health funding, and not just because of Florida. With the passing of Bill HR.1, we know that some people will be kicked off of Medicaid. And some of those individuals will be forced to go onto ADAP for HIV treatment, which will further strain the system. Now really isn't the time to disappear or cancel meetings or tell us to wait while people make decisions about our healthcare.

Instead of waiting, we're encouraging every Texan to make their voices heard, particularly Texans living with HIV. If calling your legislator is your thing, dial them up and let them hear from you: Here's an [action alert to help you locate your elected official and a sample script of what you can tell them](#). If that's not for you, you can talk to everyone in your community from your church group to the grocery clerk and put them on alert, so that they can track this too.

If you're looking for help in framing your ideas or want to find solidarity among likeminded individuals, join us at the [Texas Strikeforce](#). We are a coalition of Texans who advocate for the health, dignity, and rights of marginalized communities. Defending our health and helping others join the action is our passion. Our overarching message is simple: "We Demand accountability and transparency from DSHS."

Join us in telling the Department of State Health Services to work with us as residents of Texas.

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