The New Year Brings New HIV Funding From Congress

In related good news: The HIV housing program will receive more funding instead of less!

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Although down to the wire, congressional appropriators managed to fund the federal government for the remainder of fiscal year 2020, avoiding a government shutdown before the holidays. On December 19th, Senators passed two appropriations packages — one bundling Agriculture-FDA, Energy-Water, Health and Human Services-Labor-Education, Interior-Environment, Legislative Branch, Military Construction-VA, State-Foreign Operations, and Transportation-HUD bills, the other covering Defense, Financial Services, Commerce-Justice-Science, and Homeland Security — totaling $1.37 trillion, with the president just narrowly beating the continuing resolution expiration and signing the bills into law late on December 20th.

Regarding HIV, the House and Senate came together to both provide the funding increases for testing & treatment as well as blocking some harmful supportive services cuts proposed in the president's budget request. The deal provides the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention with an additional $140 million to implement the administration's Ending the Epidemic: A Plan for America initiative, as well as $70 million for the Ryan White Health Care Act and $50 million for the Health Resources & Services Administration. Furthermore, after a proposed cut by President Trump, the Housing Opportunities for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) program will receive an additional $17 million, a success for those impacted by HIV who know that housing is healthcare. However, $25 million slated for the Indian Health Services administration under the EtE plan was not included in the final appropriations package, a grave oversight that advocates will certainly work to address with congressional allies in coming months.

Appropriators are already at work on fiscal year 2021 appropriations, made slightly easier by the budget levels set in a two-year agreement last summer. The president is expected to release his new budget request on February 10th, and all are waiting to see if he conforms to the topline numbers he agreed to last year. AIDS United will continue working to ensure sufficient federal funding for all of the great work happening across the country, bringing us closer to ending the domestic HIV epidemic. Check back to the Policy Update regularly for all the latest on HIV funding and legislation.

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