

March 13, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
Room H-305
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
Room 1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwomen Lowey and DeLauro and Ranking Members Granger and Cole:

As the committee begins to consider the FY'21 Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS) funding bill, we the undersigned organizations urge you to fund the Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at no less than \$221 million and a special initiative to end congenital (mother to child) syphilis at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at no less than \$20 million. This increase in funding is necessary to help states and local jurisdictions respond to the highest STD levels ever reported including responding to the shocking rate of congenital syphilis.

Data released in October 2019 by the CDC shows that after five years of dramatic increases, combined cases of syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia reached all-time highs in the U.S. Tragically, congenital (mother-to-child) syphilis increased by 40 percent in one year, leading to a 22 percent increase in newborn deaths related to congenital syphilis. These historic increases have created a public health emergency with devastating long-term health consequences including infertility, cancer, transmission of HIV, and infant and newborn death. Funding for STD prevention is not only useful in fighting and quelling STD outbreaks but is an essential part of fighting these diseases.

The Division of STD Prevention at CDC partners with all 50 state health departments and seven large urban areas for STD prevention. This includes STD monitoring, outbreak response, assurance of appropriate screening and treatment by health care providers, contact tracing, increasing access to HIV care, and providing valuable STD prevention information to the general public.

Failure to adequately fund STD prevention programs will only exacerbate the rise in STDs and put more lives, and in-particular newborn lives, at risk. We thank you for your commitment to public health. For additional information, please contact Stephanie Arnold Pang at the National Coalition of STD Directors via email at sarnold@ncsddc.org.

Sincerely,

AIDS United
American Sexual Health Association
American STD Association
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
HIV Medicine Association
NASTAD
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
NMAC
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
The AIDS Institute
Treatment Action Group