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## ADAP Advocacy Association Opposes Raiding Ryan White Program Funding for PrEP

### *S.4395 would divert limited resources away from care to prevention*

For Immediate Release:  
July 13, 2022

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The ADAP Advocacy Association today expressed strong opposition to *raiding* the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) to fund prevention programs, including access to pre-exposure prophylaxis. For over thirty years, RWHAP has served as the nation’s only public health program solely dedicated to providing support and services to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Instead, other programs that already exist for prevention services should be strengthened and better funded.

“Robbing Peter to pay Paul is not the solution to funding HIV prevention efforts in the United States,” argued Brandon M. Macsata, CEO of the ADAP Advocacy Association. “There are an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States, many of whom are under-insured or completely lack insurance, and they rely on Ryan White. The legislation being proposed by Senators Rick Scott and Ben Ray Lujan would be a step in the wrong direction in fighting the HIV epidemic.”

S.4395 would authorize the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) to *divert* already limited resources away from providing care and treatment for PLWHA. The legislation reads, in part, “Any eligible area, State, or public or private nonprofit entity that receives a grant under part A, B, C, or D may use program income received from such a grant to provide to individuals who are at risk of acquiring HIV... drugs and biological products for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)... medical, laboratory, and counseling services related to such drugs and biological products...and referrals and linkages to appropriate services for the prevention of HIV.”

S.4395 – otherwise known as the Ryan White PrEP Availability Act – is extremely *ill-advised* for numerous reasons. Amending the Ryan White Program (Pub.L. 101-381) would:

- Open-up the law, (which *is currently unauthorized*) and thus subject it to potentially harmful changes in a hyper-partisan political environment.
- Change the purpose of the law, in that the purpose of the Ryan White Program is serving people *living with* HIV/AIDS.
- Create yet another access barrier for the approximately 400,000 PLWHA who are *not* in care.
- Further isolate PLWHA who are already *disproportionally impacted* by homelessness, hunger, substance use disorder, and undiagnosed and/or untreated mental health conditions.
- Impede Ending the HIV Epidemic’s efforts to both increase enrollment and expand services for low-income PLWHA, especially since discretionary funding is already *limited*.

**ADAP Advocacy Association Opposes Raiding Ryan White Program Funding for PrEP**  
**July 13, 2022**  
**Page Two**

Jen Laws, President & CEO of the Community Access National Network (CANN) and co-chair of the ADAP Advocacy Association's board of directors, argued: "The explicit intent of the Ryan White Program is to meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. We are still disproportionately facing homelessness, not enough food, or clean water to take our medications, much less thrive, and other extraordinary unmet need. Trying to authorize or amend an already underfunded program, when there is still so much unmet need in its originally intended population, undermines the goals of the program. If we try to be everything to everyone, we will end up failing on all fronts."

The ADAP Advocacy Association favors a better option to meet the needs of people who would benefit from PrEP, and that is additional HIV prevention funding. This approach would allow patient choice in medicines and support for ancillary services, provider education and outreach. Additionally, HIV prevention funding could be directed to communities that are most in need of prevention medicines and services, thereby providing more equitable access. This approach would also use and could strengthen the existing HIV prevention infrastructure.

S.4395's summary and legislative text can be downloaded online:  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/4395?s=1&r=3>.

To learn more about the ADAP Advocacy Association, AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, or S.4395, please email [info@adapadvocacy.org](mailto:info@adapadvocacy.org).

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***About the ADAP Advocacy Association:*** The ADAP Advocacy Association mission is to promote and enhance the AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs) and improves access to care for persons living with HIV/AIDS. **aaa+**<sup>®</sup> works with advocates, community, health care, government, patients, pharmaceutical companies and other stakeholders to raise awareness, offer patient educational programs, and foster greater community collaboration.