



THE **AIDS** INSTITUTE

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**TRUMP BUDGET:  
A SETBACK TO HIV AND HEPATITIS ELIMINATION**  
*Proposes 19% Cut to HIV Prevention at the CDC, No Increase for Hepatitis*

**Washington, DC** –President Donald Trump’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal includes severe cuts to many HIV and related programs and no increases for hepatitis prevention. In response, The AIDS Institute is calling on the Congress to reject the President’s budget and develop one that addresses the funding needs to prevent, treat, and research infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis in the United States.

“While we are all for improving the way in which our government works, The AIDS Institute does not believe that dramatic budget cuts to programs like HIV prevention at the CDC, the Minority AIDS Initiative, housing for people living with AIDS, Medicaid, and medical research at the NIH will improve the federal government’s ability to serve our nation’s most vulnerable people,” commented Carl Schmid, Deputy Executive Director of The AIDS Institute.

In one of the biggest setbacks, the President has proposed to **cut HIV prevention programs at the CDC by \$149 million, which translates to a 19 percent cut.** With recent successes in reducing the number of new HIV infections in the US to about 37,600 each year, now is not the time to reverse course when current HIV prevention efforts are working. This reduction in new infections represents a decline of 18 percent over the past six years, which will save the health care system nearly \$15 billion in lifetime medical costs. We must strive to further reduce the number of new infections. Decreases in the number of new HIV infections are not happening in all communities and a greater focus needs to occur among youth, particularly young black and Latino gay and bisexual men, and in areas such as the South.

We appreciate the President’s commitment to the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, including the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which provides medications, medical care, and essential coverage completion services to approximately 533,000 low-income, uninsured, and underinsured individuals with HIV. However, **the budget proposes**

**to entirely eliminate the AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETCs) (\$34 million) and the Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) (\$25 million).** These programs are working to address the unique care and treatment needs of hard to reach individuals living with HIV and people co-infected with hepatitis C to help them reach viral suppression. The AETCs specifically ensure that our medical provider workforce has access to training and education about the ever-changing HIV treatment landscape. Now is not the time to cut these two programs.

In another disappointment, the budget **maintains CDC Hepatitis Prevention funding at only \$34 million.** There are more than 55,000 new hepatitis transmissions each year and the CDC estimates that, between 2010 and 2015, new infections nearly tripled. Of the nearly 5.3 million people living with hepatitis B and/or hepatitis C in the U.S., as many as 65 percent are not aware of their infection. Viral hepatitis remains the leading cause of liver cancer. The number of deaths attributed to hepatitis C now surpasses the number of deaths associated with 60 other notifiable infectious diseases combined. The National Academies recently released a report that calls for the elimination of Hepatitis B and C in the United States by 2030. However, without significant increases in funding, attaining those goals will be impossible and the number of new infections will continue to increase.

Given that racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS, The AIDS Institute was shocked that **the budget eliminates the Secretary of Health and Human Services Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) Fund (\$54 million).** The Secretary's MAI Fund supports cross-agency demonstration initiatives to support HIV prevention, care and treatment, and outreach and education activities. **MAI funding was also reduced at SAMHSA by over \$17 million.**

The budget also **cuts \$26 million from the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program at HUD.** Stable housing plays a vital role in preventing new HIV infections, helping individuals living with HIV adhere to treatment, and reducing the likelihood of HIV-related complications. Current funding is not meeting the growing needs of homeless individuals with HIV. These cuts will certainly increase the number of people living with HIV who will not have stable housing.

**Funding for the National Institutes of Health would be cut by over 20 percent,** which will certainly result in a dramatic cut to AIDS research. Increased resources are needed to conduct research for an AIDS vaccine, new prevention and treatment technologies, and an eventual cure--all of which have shown promising advances in recent years.

There are many other funding cuts and programs eliminated that impact people living with or at risk of HIV and hepatitis. These include: **a 17 percent cut to STD prevention at the CDC (calculated over the past two years); elimination of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program, and most importantly, severe cuts to Medicaid, which provides care and treatment to over 40 percent of all people living with HIV who are in care.**

"We understand that the Trump Administration wanted to craft a budget that addresses their priorities for the nation, but in doing so, we must not forget our country's most vulnerable," said Michael Ruppal, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute. He concluded,

“We call on the Congress to reject these cuts and craft a responsible budget that provides adequate funding for non-defense discretionary and other mandatory funded programs, such as Medicaid. These are the lifesaving programs that provide for a stronger, healthier, and more prosperous nation.”

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*The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit organization that promotes action for social change through public policy research, advocacy and education.*

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