

For Immediate Release
Further information: Contact Junior Reid
Public Relations Office: (980) 298-5574
###

National HIV AIDS Housing Coalition Launches New Virtual Advocacy Group to Propel Advocacy Efforts and Secure \$600 Million in HOPWA Funding

September 21, 2023 - The National HIV AIDS Housing Coalition (NHAHC) is proud to announce the launch of its new virtual advocacy group aimed at addressing the decline in advocacy efforts during the pandemic. The U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Appropriations recently released its FY24 draft Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) spending bill that's 8.7% below the President's FY24 Budget Request. This decrease will directly impact housing programs for people living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, this spending bill reduce funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant programs by \$1.733 billion or roughly 28% below the FY23 enacted level.

With a mission to fight for \$600 million in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funding, this virtual advocacy group will serve as a platform to engage, support, and share insights from current strategic initiatives. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the ability of advocacy groups to mobilize and maintain their efforts. As a result, critical issues such as securing adequate funding for programs like HOPWA have taken a backseat. Recognizing the urgency of the matter, NHAHC is taking proactive measures to bridge this gap and continue advocating for the needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

Housing has long been recognized as a crucial component in the fight against HIV/AIDS. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), stable housing plays a significant role in preventing the spread of the disease and improving health outcomes for those living with HIV. Access to safe and affordable housing ensures that individuals can adhere to their treatment regimens, reducing the risk of transmission and improving overall well-being.

Through the virtual advocacy group, NHAHC aims to amplify the voices of those affected by HIV/AIDS and emphasize the vital connection between housing and healthcare. By creating a virtual platform to share personal stories, NHAHC will center the group's focus around housing and healthcare. Personal stories from our Lived Leadership interns will allow viewers to see the "average" individual living with HIV. This will allow other PLWHA to feel comfortable in sharing their daily challenges. The coalition seeks to create greater awareness and understanding of the profound impact that secure housing has on the lives of individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

Further, [research](#) from the CDC shows that housing instability is a significant barrier to HIV care. In addition, [research](#) from HRSA shows clients with unstable or temporary housing have lower levels of viral suppression than those with stable housing (77.3% clients versus 90.8%) clients. Having initiatives that "housing is healthcare", will lead to viral suppression while being housed. This must change.

NHAHC calls upon individuals, organizations, and communities to join forces in addressing the pervasive stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. By actively participating in this virtual advocacy network, individuals can play a crucial role in combating stigma and promoting a more inclusive society for those affected by the disease.

"NHAHC firmly believe that housing is healthcare," said Lauren Banks, Executive Director at NHAHC. "Through this virtual advocacy group, NHAHC will aim to empower individuals living with HIV/AIDS, elevate their stories, and advocate for the necessary resources to ensure access to safe and affordable housing." The National HIV/AIDS Housing Coalition remains committed to its mission of advocating for equitable access to housing for individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

The National HIV AIDS Housing Coalition invites all interested parties to join the virtual advocacy group and contribute to this vital cause. Together, lets can make a difference and create a world where housing is recognized as a fundamental pillar in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

For more information about the National HIV AIDS Housing Coalition and our advocacy work, please visit our website at www.nhahc.org.

###