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THE SENATE
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CORRECTION
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,
PARKS & RECREATION
JUDICIARY

March 13, 2014

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
State of New York
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

RE: Plan to End AIDS

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As you make final decisions regarding the FY 2014-2015 budget, we respectfully urge you to support the call by the New York State AIDS Advisory Council and other leading public health experts and advocates to develop a strategy to end AIDS in New York. The "Plan to End AIDS" draws on the most recent science indicating that widespread HIV treatment can reduce new infections, and on the implementation of health care reform through the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion.

Specifically, the Plan to End AIDS requires (i) an additional appropriation of \$10 million for the New York State AIDS Institute and (ii) the appointment of a task force to collaborate with the AIDS Institute to develop a strategic blueprint for ending AIDS in New York.

The \$10 million appropriation for the AIDS Institute would provide support for:

- Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) (\$1.5 million) – to support provider and public education and access to PrEP for eligible HIV negative individuals;
- Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) (\$1.5 million) – to support provider and public education and access to PEP to maximize its use to prevent HIV transmission;



- High-Impact Prevention/Surveillance (\$3 million) – to support the high-impact approach to HIV prevention that is designed to achieve the prevention goals of the National HIV/ AIDS Strategy and maximize the effectiveness of existing prevention methods;
- Linkage to and Retention in Care (\$2 million) – to improve individual health outcomes and reduce HIV transmission by supporting innovative initiatives that promote access to treatment and adherence support;
- Expanded Partner Services (\$1 million) – to expand partner services to identify individuals diagnosed HIV positive and out of care; and
- Evaluation and monitoring (\$1 million) – to identify individuals diagnosed HIV positive, in care and not virally suppressed.

These programmatic enhancements will pay for themselves as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimates the lifetime treatment cost of a single HIV infection is nearly \$400,000.

The NYS AIDS Advisory Council also seeks the appointment of a gubernatorial task force to develop a long-term strategy for ending the AIDS epidemic. The task force will leverage the resources, knowledge, and resolve of state government, the private and non-profit sectors, HIV/ AIDS advocacy groups, communities affected by AIDS and service providers.

While the overall HIV incidence in the state has been decreasing, the rate of new HIV infections among men who have sex with men (MSM) and young MSM of color continues to rise disproportionately. Wide disparities along the continuum of care -- including rates of diagnosis, linkage to care, retention in care, and undetectable viral-load rates -- also continue to persist among underserved groups. Transgender people, women, youth, people of color, low income and homeless individuals, people who inject drugs, immigrants, and the formerly incarcerated are less likely to be engaged in care.

We understand and greatly appreciate that your administration is pursuing key components of reducing these new HIV infections by negotiating with pharmaceutical companies for bulk purchase discounts that will increase the availability of lifesaving antiretroviral drugs, and including funding in your Executive Budget this year for stable housing for low-income New Yorkers with HIV/ AIDS. These strategic efforts, combined with the Plan to End AIDS, will have tremendous public health benefits and send the message that New York is a national and global leader in the fight against HIV transmission.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and the consideration of our requests. We look forward to working with you on the Plan to End AIDS in New York.

Sincerely,

Bruce Haylman

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Bill Parker

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Timothy M. Kennedy

Kevin Parker

Cecilia F. Kacyk

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Neil D. Breslin

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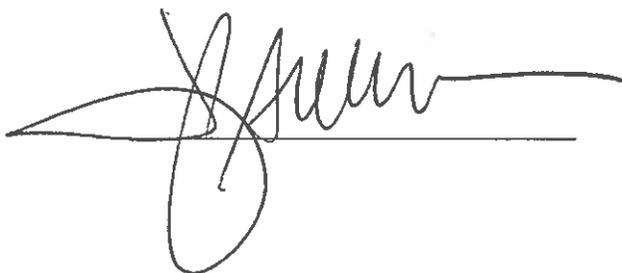
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DERRY BIPSON



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George Patonin
