Senate Health Care Bill is Disastrous for the HIV and STD Community

June 23, 2017 By NASTAD

Today, AIDS United, NASTAD, the National Coalition of STD Directors, NMAC and The AIDS Institute join together to condemn the inhumane Senate healthcare bill, which will decimate Medicaid, change private insurance reforms that protect people living with or at risk of HIV and/or STDs, and undermines public health infrastructure.

"The Senate health care bill will be catastrophic for our nation's health care system. If passed, not only will people living with or at risk of HIV and STDs suffer, but our efforts to end the HIV and STD epidemics will be impeded," stated Jesse Milan, Jr. President and CEO of AIDS United.
"The changes to Medicaid, including the repeal of the expansion and the drastic cuts to funding beginning in 2020 will harm people living with and at risk for HIV and STDs. This proposal guarantees limited access to care and benefits," added David C. Harvey, Executive Director of the National Coalition of STD Directors.

"This bill creates a false narrative that says it will help people with pre-existing conditions, but instead it allows states to waive essential health benefits such as vital prescription drugs, mental and behavioral health services, and preventive services. These cuts would allow insurers to deny the services people who are living with and who are at risk for HIV and STIs need to stay healthy," commented Paul Kawata, Executive Director of NMAC.

"In addition, this bill eliminates funding for vital services provided by the Prevention and Public Health Fund, which funds 12% of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's budget beginning in FY2018, just over three months away. This will decimate the federal government's response to public health issues, including HIV and other STDs, and exacerbate the cuts proposed in the FY2018 President's Budget," observed Michael Ruppal, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute.

"We call on the Senate to reject this bill and protect people living with or at risk of HIV and STDs. The Senate must keep its promise to the American people and protect their care," finished Murray C. Penner, Executive Director of NASTAD.

AIDS United (AU), NASTAD, the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD), NMAC, and The AIDS Institute (TAI) are national non-partisan, non-profit organizations focused on ending HIV in the U.S. They have

been working in partnership to identify and share resources to sustain successes and progress we have made in HIV and STD prevention, care and treatment in the United States.

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