

Congresswoman Matsui's Statement on the Reauthorization of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS CARE Act

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Washington, DC - Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) issued the following statement on the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act. Because of the loss of millions of dollars to California, which would effectively dismantle entire systems of care and place patients at risk, the Congresswoman voted against this legislation. Instead, Congresswoman Matsui joined with her colleagues to introduce an alternative, H.R. 6191, which would temporarily reauthorize the program for one year so the negotiations over the funding can continue.

"The federal approach to HIV/AIDS care and treatment should evolve as the epidemic evolves. However, the bill in its current form, places the needs of urban areas against those of rural areas. Funds provided to HIV/AIDS patients under the existing Ryan White CARE Act have already declined twenty-five percent since 2000. This bill only worsens that trend by robbing Peter to pay Paul. I cannot support legislation that will only accelerate those cuts.

"In its current form, this bill will be devastating to Sacramento and California as a whole. I had hoped that Congress would have allowed it to be amended on the floor, but Members were not given that opportunity. Earlier this week, I introduced a measure to extend the program for one year. And as Congress has not yet adjourned, it is my hope that we can instead pass this temporary extension so that we may have the time to do this right. It is estimated that should this legislation go into effect, Title I funds for Sacramento would be reduced by 1.6 million over the next three years before funds for the city from this program is eliminated entirely. The legislation Congresswoman Matsui introduced, H.R. 6191 would allow more time to work out the funding formula, as well as the following:

- increase authorization levels by 3.7% through FY07 to account for inflation;
- prevent monies appropriated in FY07 from reverting back to the treasury if unspent;
- provide a one time emergency authorization of \$30 million under Title II for areas with unmet need and no Title I entities;
- provide a one year extension of the requirement that States report HIV data to the CDC using names (as opposed to codes).

The CARE Act provides critical funding to help provide health care and support services for low-income individuals and families affected by HIV or AIDS. Since its enactment, CARE Act funds have helped millions of HIV/AIDS patients receive the care and treatment services they need to live healthy and productive lives.

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