

AIDS ACTION BALTIMORE, INC.

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Dear Friends:

AIDS Action Baltimore (AAB) has been providing essential services to our community since 1987. Thanks to your generosity, we're still standing. We all know only too well that times are still tough, but as we commemorate our 36th year of service, we hope we can count on your continued support which will help us maintain our many HIV/AIDS programs. We still desperately need your help to keep our doors open and continue to provide our many essential services to the Baltimore HIV/AIDS community. We hope you will remember us and continue your loyal support. Please help us in any way you can. Your donations will enable us to continue our marvelous record of benevolence and compassion with only a rate of 5.9% overhead in 2022. The amount of work we accomplish and the effect we have had on the war against HIV with only four employees is truly **amazing!**

Although HIV disease is becoming a chronic manageable disease, here is why we still need your help now more than ever:

AAB still provides financial assistance to many needy PWHIV/AIDS. AAB has provided this support to over 8,900 **people** since 1987 and \$3,246,000 **in** assistance for items such as rent and utilities, and direct programs in our community to PWHIV/AIDS and their families. We firmly believe we must continue our invaluable financial assistance program which provides a safety net to PWHIV/AIDS experiencing an emergency financial crisis.

In the latest Centers for Disease Control (CDC) data reported in 2022, Maryland was ranked 12th **among** U.S. states and territories in adult/adolescent HIV diagnosis rates (per 100,000) in 2021. At year end of 2022, there were 31,616 people aged 13 and older living with diagnosed HIV in Maryland. An estimated 3,200 PWHIV/AIDS in Maryland in 2021 remain undiagnosed.

AAB has been instrumental again this year in reducing HIV transmission in Baltimore. According to the CDC, the lifetime risk of HIV is one in 22 for Black males, one in 51 for Latinx males, and one in 140 for White males. We are currently administering an HIV PrEP prevention program, known as New Horizons. PrEP is a one pill, once a day pill that has proven to be 99% effective in reducing HIV transmission risk. Our HIV prevention program provides outreach, education, testing assistance, healthcare linkages, navigation support and support groups that promote medication adherence for Black Transgender (Trans) people and Gay men at risk of HIV, and also for people who are HIV positive. We also provide our clients with the latest in HIV prevention and treatment research information.

New Horizons promotes a continuum of care, HIV prevention and/or HIV treatment including retention in care and adherence to life-saving medications in LGBTQIA+ people as well. Our prevention and treatment efforts have been extremely successful. We seek to educate Black Gay men and Trans people about their exorbitant risk of HIV transmission, and help them build networks of support to combat the many social obstacles they encounter daily which contribute to their risk of HIV, causing them to fall in and out of care and treatment. We have also been educating people about Treatment as Prevention (TASP), also known as U=U (Undetectable HIV = Untransmittable HIV). If a person's HIV viral load is undetectable, they cannot transmit HIV to another person! We are very proud of our very successful support and education programs which have helped to decrease HIV as well as the number of PWHIV/AIDS we have helped to access and remain on life-saving HIV drugs. AAB can continue these life-saving programs with your help.

Our national work affects all who are touched by HIV/AIDS. We are working with industry to continually change the standard of care by ensuring that their new drug pipelines remain robust, and by replacing older more toxic drugs with more effective, better tolerated drugs, as well as exciting new long-acting drugs for HIV prevention and treatment that may require only daily, weekly or monthly dosing. This is the wave of the future.

AAB has been instrumental in the formation of the Drug Development Committee of the AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition, a national organization that interacts with the pharmaceutical industry, pressuring companies to study drugs expeditiously and ethically and to include the HIV affected community in all aspects of research and development. AAB has also been a leading member of the national Fair Pricing Coalition (FPC), pressuring “big pharma” to price HIV drugs reasonably, limit price increases, cap ongoing drug prices for government programs like AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, and to initiate co-pay programs for patients with private insurance. We convinced every HIV and Hepatitis C drug company to create programs that will cover outrageously expensive co-pays and other out of pocket (OOP) costs for people with private insurance. We also lead a coalition of local service providers to make sure the Maryland AIDS Drug Assistance Program (MADAP) functions properly after the hack of Maryland Department of Health’s computers. With your continued support, we will be able to continue to ensure that the working poor in Maryland continue to receive their HIV medications without further interruptions.

We are very excited that scientists have begun to work on HIV “cure-related” research. AAB is working with government, industry and the national HIV community nationally to make a “cure” for HIV or what we are now calling “durable HIV suppression” a reality. Even though this will take years to come to fruition, we have to start somewhere. AAB is a member of the DARE Martin Delaney Cure Research Collaboratories. AAB is also working with DARE researchers to bring additional resources to Baltimore for local cure research projects. We conducted four HIV Cure Forums in 2019 to 2022.

HIV policy gets more complicated every year. We are in danger of losing all our hard-won treatment and prevention gains because of radical Republicans who have created a health and safety emergency for many LGBTQIA+ people. Because of anti-LGBTQIA+ fever that is circling the country, we believe it will be much harder to obtain the money we need to fight HIV. HIV service delivery gets more difficult every year!

Locally, we are working very closely with the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) in their End the HIV Epidemic Initiative. The BCHD has also provided funding for our prevention and treatment programs. We had seven Town Halls in conjunction with the BCHD from 2020 to 2023, discussing new HIV and COVID-19 news. Innovative events like this would not happen without AIDS Action Baltimore.

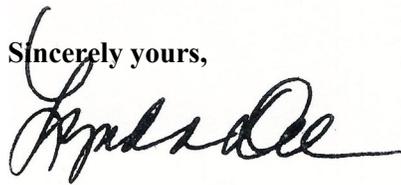
AAB successfully advocated for increased NIH HIV research funding, and will continue to advocate for other HHS budget increases, like continued funding for the Ryan White Care Act for the support of PWHIV/AIDS no matter what obstacles we face in Washington, DC! We are using our many years of government research and policy expertise and connections in the fight against LGBTQIA+ hate and discrimination. AAB is working with national coalitions across the country to protect HIV services, including PrEP4All in the fight for the Affordable CARE Act to cover HIV prevention drug accessibility for people in our community at risk for HIV.

AAB was essential in ensuring that PWHIV/AIDS were eligible for COVID research trials and vaccines. We have also been fierce advocates of expanded vaccines and treatment for mpox for our community at both the federal and state levels. AAB has also conducted two Town Halls in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, BCHD, Johns Hopkins and the Pride Center of Maryland in an effort to inform people of the risk of mpox as well as how and where to access vaccines and treatment. Advocating for life-saving vaccines and treatments has been our life’s work. Our expertise and long-standing contacts in these arenas are invaluable. Our work is way ahead of the curve. The type of advocacy done by AAB does not happen in any other disease community.

Our city and country need the expertise of AIDS activists now more than ever. As always, we will continue to work locally and nationally for PWHIV/AIDS as well as any other diseases or conditions that plague PWHIV/AIDS. With your help, we can continue to keep our doors open to face other medical issues that affect PWHIV/AIDS in our community. But we cannot do it without your help. Please contribute as much as you can to help us keep our doors open at this critical time in our history.

As we celebrate another year of our many accomplishments, please help us to continue our life-saving programs and our vital local and national research and treatment advocacy. We greatly appreciate your continued support in these tough times. Thank you in advance for your contribution and for your past generosity. We know you are called on to make many contributions. We very much appreciate your continued confidence in our work. Your donation will help us to save lives. We are forever grateful for your trust and loyal support. Remember, now more than ever, without people like you, there would be no AIDS Action Baltimore! Happy Holidays to you and yours! We hope you all remain safe and well.

Sincerely yours,



**Lynda Dee & the AAB Board
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CONTRIBUTION ENCLOSED:

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$500 OTHER

Current financial statement is available upon request. Contacting AIDS Action Baltimore at 14 East Eager Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 or (410)837-2437. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401 for the cost of copying and postage.