HIV Health Care Access Working Group

July 19, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
Sent via fax: 202-456-2461

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing on behalf of the HIV Health Care Access Working Group (HHCAWG) to urge you to protect our country’s most vulnerable residents in the deficit reduction process by not reducing the federal commitment to the Medicaid program through block grants or other financing mechanisms that lower the federal share of costs, such as a new blended matching rate.

Your leadership in successfully fighting for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and in developing the National HIV/AIDS Strategy was unprecedented and offered new hope to people with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. Just a little more than a year later Medicaid proposals under consideration threaten to undermine our progress before reforms are fully implemented. More than a million people living with, and affected by, HIV/AIDS in the U.S. are counting on your leadership to continue and for your legacy to include standing by meaningful, comprehensive health care reform.

We are at a pivotal moment in the HIV epidemic. The science is clear. Treatment is available that offers people with HIV/AIDS the opportunity to live healthy, productive and long lives. The evidence also is clear that the benefits of treatment extend beyond the individual to the community and public health as effective treatment significantly reduces the risk of HIV transmission. Now is the time to stand by programs that support lifesaving HIV care and avoid measures that may save federal dollars in the short-term but will cost more over the long-term – whether measured in health care expenditures, health outcomes or lives lost.

Respectfully Submitted by the Steering Committee of the HIV Health Care Access Working Group,