

HOUSE UPS AIDS ANTE

An appropriations subcommittee boosts Ryan White CARE Act funding and exceeds Clinton's request for ADAP money by Bob Roehr



Bill Arnold's ADAP Working Group got a raise, but he anticipates a need for even more funds

Federal funding for AIDS programs quietly passed a crucial milestone June 23 when the House Labor, Education and Human Services Appropriations subcommittee approved a \$181 million increase in spending for Ryan White CARE Act programs. That is a 15.75 percent increase over current funding, a major jump in light of generally tight budgets.

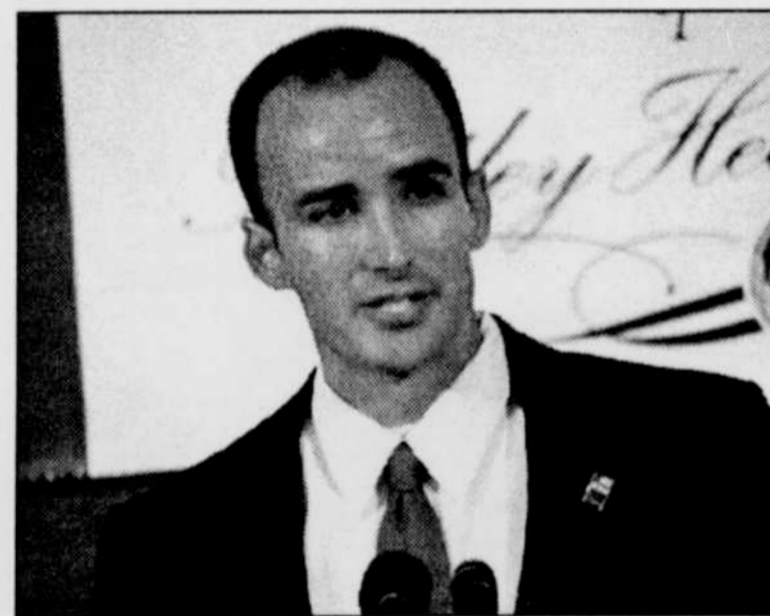
"By increasing funding across all parts of the CARE Act, subcommittee members showed that they understand the need for a comprehensive and balanced approach to combating this epidemic," says Seth Kilbourn, senior health policy advocate for the Human Rights

"The president proposed flat funding of prevention, and Congress flat funded it," Zingale says. "And that is tragic."

Cornelius Baker, executive director of the National Association of People With AIDS, concurs. "We simply cannot beat this epidemic if we don't do more with prevention," he says.

But he admits funding is only part of the problem: "You could throw billions of dollars at it, and if you can't do the right programs, like needle exchange, you are not going to be effective in the long run. We have to acknowledge that."

The National Institutes of Health research budget is slated to increase by 9.2 percent over-



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Campaign, a national gay and lesbian political organization based in Washington, D.C.

Daniel Zingale, executive director of the AIDS Action Council, a network of organizations that provide health care and services to people with HIV and AIDS, applauds the \$21 million increase for housing assistance for people living with HIV that is part of the funding package.

"[It] is always our most vulnerable program," he assesses.

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program, meanwhile, gains \$100 million, which is \$16 million more than President Clinton requested.

Bill Arnold, co-chair of the ADAP Working Group, says the anticipated need for this program is an increase of \$173 million. He says the group will push for more money as the appropriations process moves forward.

Not all the news was good however: Funding for prevention efforts didn't decrease, but it didn't increase either.

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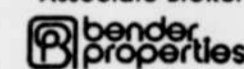


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