Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 28, 2005

The Honorable Joe Knollenberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury,
Housing, and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
H-218, Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John W. Olver
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury,
Housing, and Urban Development
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Knollenberg and Ranking Member Olver:

We are writing to urge you to ensure that the final Fiscal Year 2006 T/T/HUD Appropriations bill includes at least $290 million for the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program. As you know, the HOPWA program, which enjoys wide bipartisan support, is the only federal housing program that specifically provides cities and states with the resources to address the housing crisis facing people living with AIDS.

The costs associated with AIDS treatments often force people to decide between essential medications and other necessities, such as housing. Individuals with HIV/AIDS must have stable housing to ensure access to, and/or benefit, from complex drug treatments that often require special dietary needs. In addition, medications must often be refrigerated and taken on a rigid time schedule. Inadequate housing is not only a barrier to treatment, but also puts people with HIV/AIDS at risk of prolonged illness and premature death. At any given time, one-third to one-half of all Americans with AIDS are either homeless or in imminent danger of losing their homes. HOPWA answers this need, successfully providing suitable, reasonably priced housing for thousands of Americans battling AIDS.

HOPWA enables cities and states to design and provide community-based, cost-effective housing for people living with AIDS and their families. It provides maximum flexibility to states and communities to implement strategies that respond to local housing needs and shortfalls. In addition, the administrative costs of the program are capped, ensuring the money goes directly to serving people with AIDS.

In FY 2005 alone, HOPWA funds will support the delivery of services to over 80,000 households in 122 jurisdictions across 39 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Unfortunately, the demand for housing accommodations for people living with HIV/AIDS continues to greatly outweigh the resources currently available.

The HOPWA program offers thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS, and their families, the safety and stability necessary to benefit from drug treatments that have contributed to a dramatic reduction in AIDS mortality in this nation. We urge you to give the highest priority to an allocation of

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at least the House-passed figure of $290 million for HOPWA in the FY 2006 T/T/HUD Appropriations bill so that this important program may continue to serve those in need.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Henry A. Waxman

George Miller

Donald M Payne

Michael R. McNulty

Edward J. Markey

Dale E. Kildee

Peter A. Fazio

Eliot L. Engel

Dennis J. Kucinich

Hilda L. Solis

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Michael Honda

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Charles B. Rangel

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Bill Lipinski

Elijah E. Cummings

Robert Menendez

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Rush Holt

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Jim Moran

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Gene Green

Chris Van Hollen

Daniel Lipinski

Susan A. Davis

Tom Allen

Brad Sherman

Signatories of the FY06 HOPWA Appropriations Conference Letter:

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