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AETC Advocacy Day Talking Points April 24th & 25th, 2018

Over the last two and a half decades, the Ryan White Program has proven its ability to be flexible and responsive to changing needs. The AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETCs), a segment of Part F of the Ryan White Program, are some of the most vital resources to increasing the quantity and quality of services, working to ensure a vigorous HIV workforce and to achieving the goals of getting to zero new infections.

- HIV education and training programs for health care providers are critical to develop and strengthen first responders to the HIV epidemic. When the need for knowledgeable clinicians trained to provide HIV treatment arises, the AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETCs) have led the way to ensure access to quality care time and time again.
- In the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations, House and Senate appropriators stepped up to the plate and showed that they understand the vital importance of both AETCs and the SPNS Program to the health and welfare of our nation, restoring both to level funding and reversing the Trump Administration's decision to zero out the programs.
- Unfortunately, as was the case last year, the Trump administration has zeroed out both the AETCs and SPNS program, striking a major blow to the ability of our nation's medical providers to offer quality health care to people living with and affected by HIV. This year, **we must once again ask you to restore these programs to level funding or increase funding for the AETCs by \$1.9 million for a total of \$35.5 million dedicated to these vital programs.**
- In addition to the AETCs and the SPNS program, **a whole host of other vital HIV programs have significantly reduced or eliminated by the President's budget again this year.** Foremost among these is the Secretary's Minority AIDS Initiative Fund (SMAIF), which would have its entire \$53.9 million budget cut in the House's appropriations package, and Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) funding at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), which would be see all \$116 million of its funding ripped away. SMAIF and SAMHSA MAI funding is crucial to the reduction of poor HIV-related health outcomes and disparities for racial and ethnic minorities. Without this funding the ability of AIDS service organizations to effectively provide care for populations disproportionately impacted by HIV is severely limited.

As the wider health system continues to change, it is critically important that policy makers retain their strong support and funding for this all aspects of this program that is leading the Nation's efforts to care for people living with HIV and reduce the number of new HIV infections, while also providing a model for other health care fields on how to effectively and efficiently operate a holistic system for providing at risk population with the services they need to live healthy, full lives.