



June 14, 2022

**PRESS STATEMENT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**      Contact: [Peggy.Tighe@PowersLaw.com](mailto:Peggy.Tighe@PowersLaw.com)

### **RWC-340B Applauds Senators Scott and Lujan for New Legislation to Prevent HIV/AIDS**

RWC-340B enthusiastically support Senators Rick Scott (R-FL) and Ben Ray Luján's (D-NM) introduction of the Ryan White PrEP Availability Act, landmark legislation that will help us continue to serve persons living with HIV/AIDS and expand our ability to serve those at risk of contracting HIV.

In 1990, Congress enacted the Ryan White CARE Act to provide grants to state and local governments for treatment of HIV/AIDS. The legislation has been reauthorized and expanded as the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP). Serving over a half a million clients each year through over 2,000 grant recipients, RWHAP provides grants to government and community-based organizations to provide HIV primary medical care, medications, and support services for underserved and uninsured persons living with HIV/AIDS.

While the RWHAP gives us important tools to take care of persons living with HIV/AIDS, current law does not allow Ryan White clinics to use our existing resources to provide Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for those who do not have HIV. This new law promotes access to prevention from trusted sources. PrEP is a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy involving the daily use of antiretroviral medications to reduce the risk of HIV infection in HIV-negative individuals in conjunction with other prevention methods to reduce the risk of infection.

RWC-340B president and Cempa Community Cares CEO, Shannon Stephenson said, "We are delighted that these Senators are working in a bipartisan way to make modest changes to the RWHAP statute to prevent HIV through advanced medications not envisioned when the law was first created."

She noted, "We are committed to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic, but we are limited by the statute to use our resources for only those who test positive for HIV. As such, we are unable to provide medical care that can **prevent** the disease; this is akin to doing our jobs with 'one hand tied behind our backs.'"

Bill Keeton, Vice President and Chief Advocacy Officer at Vivent Health said, "Ryan White funded health care providers and health systems are experts in providing comprehensive care for people living with HIV." He added, "This bill would enable us to use our effective and

proven care delivery systems to serve people at-risk for HIV who would benefit from initiating PrEP to reduce their risk of contracting HIV, at no new cost to federal or state taxpayers.”

RWC-340B calls on Congress to advance this legislation as an important new tool in our fight to end HIV/AIDS.

*RWC-340B is a national association of HIV/AIDS health care clinics and service providers that receive funding under the Ryan White CARE Act, either through a primary grant or subgrant, and participate as covered entities in the 340B program. Ryan White clinics are dedicated to caring for low-income and vulnerable patients living with HIV/AIDS. Many of the association's Ryan White members are also Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), FQHC "look-alikes", sexually transmitted disease clinics, and safety net hospitals.*