



July 19, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Peggy.Tighe@PowersLaw.com](mailto:Peggy.Tighe@PowersLaw.com)

## **Ryan White Clinic Association Strongly Supports New Legislation Led by U.S. Senators Scott, Lujan, and Peters that Makes Important Strides to Prevent HIV/AIDS**

WASHINGTON, DC – RWC-340B applauds Senators Rick Scott (R-FL), Ben Ray Lujan’s (D-NM), and Gary Peters (D-MI) for introducing the Ryan White PrEP Availability Act, landmark legislation that will help Ryan White clinics continue to serve persons living with HIV/AIDS and better serve those at risk of contracting HIV.

The legislation increases flexibility for Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) clinics that provide care and treatment for individuals living with HIV/AIDS, allowing them to cover expenses of HIV/AIDS prevention medication such as PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and associated necessary services, all without changing the purpose, function, and benefit of the RWHAP.

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.

“While the RWHAP provides important tools to take care of persons living with HIV/AIDS, current law does not allow Ryan White clinics to use existing resources to provide PrEP for those who do not have HIV,” said RWC-340B president and Cempa Community Cares CEO, Shannon Burger.

Burger added, “The genius of this legislation is that it allows us to do what we are best positioned to do within our communities and with our existing resources.” By adding a new, voluntary part to the RWHAP, Burger said, “this bipartisan legislation would modernize current law to prevent HIV through advanced medications and ancillary services not envisioned when the law was first created.”

Bill Keeton, Vice President and Chief Advocacy Officer at Vivent Health said, “Without this modest change to the law, we are fighting the war against HIV/AIDS with one hand tied behind our backs.” 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.”

Nearly 30 years ago, Congress enacted the Ryan White CARE Act to provide grants to state and local governments for treatment of HIV/AIDS. 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.