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## NMAC Applauds Congressional Efforts on Minority AIDS Initiative

With the passage of the FY2023 Omnibus bill, [NMAC](#) (formerly the National Minority AIDS Council), the [Latino Commission on AIDS](#), and the [San Francisco Community Health Center](#) applaud Congresswoman Maxine Waters and Congresswoman Barbara Lee for calling on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to bring the federal Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) back to its original intent: to provide critical funds for HIV care, treatment, and prevention to minority led organizations.

NMAC is also very pleased with the increases in MAI funding in the bill. While not what was originally requested, the multi-million dollar increase to the MAI takes us one step closer to addressing inequities around HIV care in minority communities and furthers the federal plan to end the HIV epidemic by 2030.

“We could not be happier that this language restoring the MAI to its original purpose has been included in this bill,” said Paul Kawata, Executive Director of NMAC. “When the MAI was created in the late 1990s, it was meant to fund minority led organizations to ensure that people of color - who have faced some of the worst of the HIV epidemic - could receive care and prevention services from within their communities. This change back will help to ensure that federal HIV funds will reach those who need them the most in the most effective way.”

“The Latino Commission on AIDS stands firm to advocate on behalf of communities of color to ensure the Minority AIDS Initiative invests in communities most affected by HIV and AIDS in our nation,” said Guillermo Chacon, President of the Latino Commission on AIDS and founder of the Hispanic Health Network. “We are profoundly grateful for the steadfast commitment of Congresswoman Maxine Waters to protect, enhance, and ensure the original intent of MAI, that funds contribute to the end of HIV in the U.S. and Territories by investing in community-based organizations and providers who deliver services free of stigma and discrimination.”

“If we are to ever see the end of the HIV epidemic, organizations led by people of color are essential to the solution,” said Lance Toma, Chief Executive Officer of the San Francisco Community Health Center. “It is critical that the MAI honors its founding intentions, to build the capacity of our organizations so that we are able to effectively and meaningfully engage our communities in the work to end HIV. People of color, queer and trans

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“I am pleased that my continuing efforts have increased funding for the Minority AIDS initiative, and I am especially pleased that, working with other Members of Congress and NMAC, we have been successful in restoring this critical initiative to its original intent, which is to prioritize grants to minority-led organizations that have the cultural competence to effectively serve minority communities,” said Congresswoman Maxine Waters.

NMAC, the Latino AIDS Commission, and the San Francisco Community Health Center will continue to work with Congresswoman Waters, Congresswoman Lee, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra to ensure that MAI funds are dedicated to minority led organizations.

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1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
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