

Dear CHAMPsters,

This is a critical time for all of us to be speaking out to lift the ban on federal funding for syringe exchange. Last week President Obama released his Fiscal Year 2010 budget request. This budget still includes the language that bans the use of federal funding for syringe exchange programs.

This means your calls and letters are more critical than ever, and we still can lift the ban this year!

In the next couple of weeks, the 2010 Labor, Health and Education Appropriations Bill will be written. **This is where the actual federal ban language currently exists.** We have shown support for lifting the ban in this bill by getting co-sponsors onto HR 179, the Community AIDS & Hepatitis Act. And we've gotten promises on votes from those who have not signed on but would support removing the ban in the Appropriations process.

Our response now is critical!

Congress needs to hear from us that:

1. We support **H.R. 179**, the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2009 and we want them to become co-sponsors.
2. We want the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies to remove the ban in the **2010 Appropriations Bill**.

Step 1: Call your Representative.

Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121 and ask to speak to your Representative. When calling the switchboard, you may give your zip code if you do not know the names of your members of Congress.

When someone answers the phone, tell them:

- My name is [NAME], and I live in [CITY, STATE]. Thanks for taking my call.
- I'm calling to encourage Representative [REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME] to cosponsor H.R. 179, the Community AIDS and Hepatitis Prevention Act of 2009.

- [pick one of the talking points *below* to make your call personal]
- (Give or leave your phone number if you would like a call back.)
- Thank you.

You can also send a letter to your Representative [here](#). (To see list of cosponsors, click [here](#))

If your Representative is a co-sponsor, thank them for their support of HR 179!

Step 2: Call for the Labor, Health and Education Appropriations Bill.

Call Rep. David Obey (WI) 202-225-3365, Chair of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies.

- My name is [NAME], and I live in [CITY, STATE]. Thanks for taking my call.
- I'm calling to encourage Rep. David Obey to take leadership to remove the federal ban on syringe exchange funding in the 2010 Appropriations Bill.
- [pick one of the talking points *below* to make your call personal]
- (Give or leave your phone number if you would like a call back.)
- Thank you.

Talking Points:

- Each year, approximately 8,000 Americans contract HIV/AIDS and approximately 12,000 Americans contract the hepatitis C virus directly or indirectly from sharing contaminated syringes.
- Making clean, sterile syringes available is a simple, cost-effective method of saving lives and providing care to hard-to-reach populations.
- But since 1988, there has been a Congressional ban on the use of federal funds for Syringe Exchange Programs nationwide. Last year, Congress lifted the ban that forbid Washington DC from using its local tax dollars to support syringe exchange in the city itself - now we need the ban lifted on federal funding for the whole nation.

After you make your calls, please forward this to everyone who is ready to see the 20-year ban lifted!

To find out more about CHAMP's national work at the intersection of HIV and imprisonment through Project UNSHACKLE, please contact Laura McTighe, Director of Project UNSHACKLE, at lmctighe@champnetwork.org or (212) 937-7955, Ext. 20, or visit us online at www.champnetwork.org/unshackle