



HIV/AIDS Service Providers of Vermont

To: Senate Health and Welfare Committee
From: Vermont AIDS Service Organizations
Date: April 9, 2015
Re: FY 2016 HIV/AIDS Budget Amendment with Explanation

In recent years, the HIV/AIDS client-based services appropriation has been in the amount of \$475,000 - a combination of \$135,000 in GF and \$340,000 in federal medication rebate funds. The Governor recommended cutting 100% of the GF appropriation, leaving only \$340,000 in rebate funding. This was a 28% cut from recent years.

The AIDS community worked with VDH over the past few months to address this issue. VDH has recently determined that there will be sufficient federal medication rebate funds to replace the \$135,000 GF proposed cut. The House passed language in Sec. E. 312 reflects this and appropriates \$475,000 in rebate funds.

Although we are very appreciative, federal rebate funds come with some restrictions. We feel confident that we can provide almost all of our current client-based services with this source of funding, but there are some services that cannot be funded with rebates. These services include peer support initiatives that keep Vermonters living with HIV/AIDS healthy and connected to care, such as health education and health adherence workshops.

We are requesting that the Senate Appropriations Committee add the following underlined language to E.312 (a)(1):

Sec. E.312 Health – public health

(a) AIDS/HIV funding:

(1) In fiscal year 2016 and as provided in this section, the Department of Health shall provide grants in the amount of \$475,000 in AIDS Medication Rebates special funds to the Vermont AIDS service and peer-support organizations for client-based support services. It is the intent of the general assembly that if AIDS Medication Rebates special fund monies in this subsection are unavailable to cover exiting client-based support services, up to \$25,000 for client-based support services shall be maintained through the general fund or other state funding sources.....

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.