

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the commitment your commitment to the Ryan White CARE Act and I am glad we are marking up the bill today.

We have come a long way since the start of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Twenty years ago, someone was diagnosed as being HIV positive and people assumed it was a death sentence. The public was often misinformed about modes of transmission and the science behind treatment was far more limited than where we are today.

However, we've seen decreases in the CARE Act resources needed to assist health care providers, service projects and people living with the disease over the last few years. The decreased funding coupled with recent data indicating the rates of HIV/AIDS in cities like Washington D.C. are comparable to that of developing nations or news from Montana that the number of infection rates in the month of September was higher than the number reported in all of last year—is proof positive that we need to invest more resources towards HIV/AIDS programs.

At the Human Rights Campaign dinner President Obama said “we are reinvigorating our response to HIV/AIDS here at home.” That message is a call to action on the part of this Committee and this Congress to pass a strong Ryan White Care ACT Reauthorization and I look forward to voting for this bill. I yield back.