

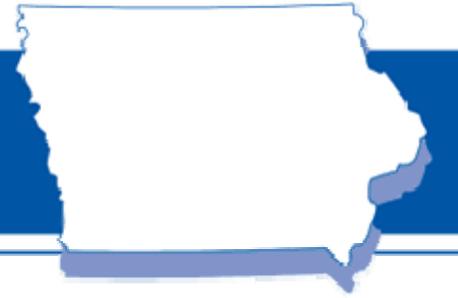
October 19, 2009

[Unsubscribe](#)

[Update My Profile](#)

U.S. Senator

TOM HARKIN OF IOWA



<http://harkin.senate.gov>

(202) 224-3254

For Immediate Release

October 19, 2009

Contact: Kate Cyrul / Bergen Kenny

202-224-3254

CHAIRMAN HARKIN APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF COMPREHENSIVE MEASURE FOR PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF HIV, AIDS

Washington, D.C. – Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, released the following statement after the Senate passed the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act of 2009 by unanimous consent.

“Today marks an important milestone in our ongoing national struggle with HIV and AIDS. Twenty-eight years ago, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued its first warning about the disease we now know as AIDS. Today, we approve the fourth extension of the Ryan White CARE Act, the comprehensive legislation first enacted in 1990, for the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS.

“As a result of the Ryan White program, we have among the best HIV and AIDS treatment programs in the world. Now with this new legislation, we’ll make it also the fairest – with greater access for all, higher standards of quality, and guaranteed continuity of care.

“My hope is that as we continue to improve the Ryan White CARE Act to meet the needs of this disease, the remedies we adopt will continue to come from the bright lights of science, not the dark fears of bigotry. This is an important day for people living with HIV and AIDS, and for all Americans. We must do more to provide care and support for those caught in the epidemic. This legislation will give us the time and support we need to accomplish that goal.”

This legislation continues towards the development of a national plan that:

- **Preserves** access to life-saving medications, quality health care, and support services for persons living with HIV and AIDS who have come to depend on publicly-funded systems;
- **Extends** this system of quality care to persons with HIV and AIDS who have faced waiting lists for medications and severe limits on their access to specialty health care;

- **Protects** governmental and community-based institutions charged with providing this care as all face growing case loads and the more challenging needs of an evolving population of persons with HIV/AIDS;
- **Balances** the needs of high-prevalence cities and states with those experiencing rapidly growing epidemics;
- **Ensures** that those who have been relying on their local system of care that it will continue to be there for them; and
- **Reassures** individuals seeking testing for HIV that comprehensive care and support will also be ready to serve them.