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July 12, 2010

 Jeffrey S. Crowley
 Director
 Office of National AIDS Policy
 and Senior Advisor on Disability Policy
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
 Washington, DC 20500

Dear Jeff:

On behalf of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), whose members administer state HIV prevention and care and viral hepatitis programs nationwide, we write to applaud the Obama Administration's leadership on domestic HIV/AIDS through the release of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS). We look forward to reviewing the strategy and accompanying implementation plan when they are released this week. As major implementing partners in this plan, NASTAD members are eager to engage in a meaningful, sustained and dynamic relationship that ensures the strategy maintains credibility, accountability and ultimately proves successful in meeting the goals of the Strategy.

As you are aware, state public health agencies serve an essential and unique role in the delivery of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment programs. State health departments are entrusted through U.S. law as the "central authorities of the nation's public health system" and as such, bear the primary public sector responsibility for health. State public health agencies provide leadership, resources and technical assistance to local and community-based agencies and work in partnership with the federal government, other state and local agencies and community-based entities to meet the needs of all citizens within their borders. State and local health departments also have a primary responsibility to address disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations and among gay and bisexual men and other disproportionately impacted populations. Given these unique responsibilities, NASTAD members will be particularly interested in working with the Administration on the future of the Ryan White Program in light of health reform and in assessing the implications for programs of any resource allocation changes across the continuum of HIV/AIDS programs.

As the Administration moves forward with implementation, we request an opportunity to convene a meeting with a group of NASTAD members and you in August to discuss implementation issues and evaluation.

It is our hope that this initial meeting would be the first in a series of on-going, regular meetings with NASTAD members as we work in partnership to achieve the goals outlined in the NHAS. Again, we applaud your leadership in addressing this preventable and costly disease through the development of a National HIV/AIDS Strategy, and welcome the opportunity to work with you as the development process moves forward.

Sincerely,



Julie M. Scofield
Executive Director



Ann Robbins
NASTAD Chair
HIV/STD Director
Texas Department of State Health Services