

**Testimony
Appropriations Committee
DPH Budget
Emilio Quiles
20 February 2009**

To whom it may concern; My name is Emilio Quiles, and have been living with HIV for about twenty years now. I have had my share of difficult times. Back then, people were dying of Aids/Hiv by the hundreds. As time passed on; new medications have been introduced to us, and people began learning how to better cope (and live) with this deadly virus. As time went on; new agencies were established and people found it better to cope with this situation at hand. Although it was not the answer for us, it was a better way to function in this crisis.. We began getting help from Federal Government for 1) Better affordable housing to meet the demands of homelessness among us, 2) Food programs which help us to have food so we would not have to take our medications on an empty stomach. 3) Utilities assistance, because some of us are unable to keep up with them because we are on fixed incomes. (It is necessary to refrigerate some of our medications, in some cases) 4) Transportation became available for us to be able to keep our appointments with our doctors. (This is very important so we know how our virus is being kept under control) and 5) Case management; they help to provide information about the resources that are available to us. (and, unfortunately they are very, very understaffed!! So, what does all this mean to me? Everything!!!! We have come so far for Federal funding to just stopped or the funding to be reduced. This would mean-- 1) No housing (means more homelessness) 2) No food programs (means more hunger and/or medications possibly not working correctly---uncertain future) 3) No transportation- means less visits with doctors; which leads to no medication being prescribed to treat our conditions (uncertain futures) 4) No medical; means uncertain futures. 5) No utilities; means we are in the dark and medications that are to be refrigerated will spoil (again uncertain futures). and 6) Medical adherence; means less people helping us adjust properly with medications and entitlements. It is very important that you restore the \$2.5 million budget. This is NOT the time to cut our resources! Please keep in mind that we are not dying as much anymore, but instead we are learning how to live with virus. (Just like any other virus/disease that does not have a cure yet.) I want to send a message to the Government and Legislators that now is NOT the time to cut these budgets; but to improve our way of life for a better tomorrow and to better educate our children and grandchildren. Cutting these budgets now could and will be a devastating blow to our already hurting society. PLEASE rethink your decisions now. Yours truly, Emilio Quiles