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## ADAP Advocacy Association Releases 2010 Congressional Scorecard; Legislative Gridlock Leads to Failing Grade for Entire Congress

*Failure of Congress to Act has Fueled Escalating ADAP Waiting Lists Facing People Living with HIV/AIDS*

For Immediate Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 7, 2011) – The [ADAP Advocacy Association](http://www.adapadvocacyassociation.org), also known as **aaa+**, today released its 2010 Congressional Scorecard evaluating Members of Congress on their support for the AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs). Despite ADAPs enjoying strong bipartisan support, partisan gridlock led to total inaction in the U.S. Congress, resulting in thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS being denied care.

The Congressional Scorecard ranked the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate on numerous items, including floor votes on appropriations and other bills directly impacting ADAPs, co-sponsors on pending legislation improving ADAPs and whether HIV/AIDS was even mentioned on their official websites. The scorecard issued one of four grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with Honors or Pass with Excellence. Unfortunately, **every** Member of Congress received a “**Fail**” grade since the Congress failed to approve emergency supplemental funding to shore-up the cash-strapped ADAPs, or pass *any* legislation to alleviate the crisis.

“What started out in June 2009 as a problem confronting less than one hundred Americans living with HIV/AIDS trying to access their life-saving medications under ADAP, exploded into a national embarrassment impacting thousands of patients nationwide,” argued **Brandon M. Macsata**, CEO of the ADAP Advocacy Association. “While there are certainly congressional leaders in both political parties who went to great lengths to solve the ADAP crisis last year, our congressional scorecard reflects the ‘anger’ and ‘fear’ among most people living with HIV/AIDS in America – which has translated into Congress receiving a failing grade.”

Among the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, 78 received an “honorable mention” for their support of the “*Dear Colleague*” letter circulated by Rep. Donna Christensen (D, Virgin Islands) calling for \$126 million in emergency supplemental funding. That letter received strong support from the Congressional Black Caucus, but failed to garner widespread support from the entire Democratic caucus. Sadly, only one Republican – Rep. Joseph Cao representing New Orleans Parish – endorsed the letter (and he was subsequently defeated in the midterm elections).

In the U.S. Senate, six (6) Senators – all Republicans – received an “honorable mention” for their support of the “*Addressing Cost Containment Measures to Ensure the Sustainability and Success of the ADAP Act*” ([S.3401](#)). The ACCESS ADAP Act would have transferred \$126 million from discretionary amounts appropriated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Public Law 111-5) that remained unobligated, to be used by the Secretary of Health & Human Services in fiscal year 2010 to provide assistance in reducing waiting lists under the AIDS Drug Assistance Programs. S.3401 was the only ADAP-related legislation introduced last year.

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“It is unfortunate that we decided to issue a failing grade for the entire U.S. Congress, because there are many leaders who deserve our thanks and recognition – including Representatives Barbara Lee and Dr. Donna Christensen in the House and Senators Richard Burr and Dr. Tom Coburn in the Senate for their respective efforts,” said **William Arnold**, **aaa+** board president and Executive Director of the Community Access National Network. “This decision was not taken lightly to fail the entire Congress, but we ultimately decided that every Member of Congress needed to be put on notice that enough is enough and it is time to end the ADAP waiting lists in ten states.”

The Congressional Scorecard is available online at <http://www.adapadvocacyassociation.org/reportcard.html>.

ADAPs provide life-saving medications to people living with HIV/AIDS nationwide who are uninsured or under-insured. This vital federal-state program faced a \$126.0 million shortfall for Fiscal Year 2010 (up from a \$108.9 million shortfall the previous year), just to keep pace with current demand. In 2010, that shortfall led to waiting lists nationwide totaling 4,732 – including Arkansas (9 people), Florida (2,491 people), Georgia (845 people), Louisiana (532 people), Montana (15 people), North Carolina (87 people), Ohio (380 people), South Carolina (314 people) and Virginia (59 people) – with 11 ADAPs, including four with current waiting lists, reported they are considering implementing new or additional cost-containment measures by the end of ADAP’s current fiscal year (March 31, 2011).<sup>1</sup>

To learn more about the 2010 Congressional Scorecard, ADAP waiting lists or the ADAP Advocacy Association, please contact Brandon M. Macsata by phone at (305) 519-4256 or email at [info@adapadvocacyassociation.org](mailto:info@adapadvocacyassociation.org).

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<sup>1</sup> National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), The ADAP Watch, December 17, 2010.