

Campaign for a New Drug Policy

Memo

To: U.S. Programs Staff

From: Andy Ko and Kima Taylor, Campaign for New Drug Policy

Date: 16 May 2011

Re: Prospective Campaign for New Drug Policy Docket II Grant Recommendations

The Campaign for a New Drug Policy will propose the following eleven grants for U.S. Programs' Docket II, scheduled for July 11, 2011. These grants would advance our goals of Promoting Drug Policy Based on Public Health Principles and Promoting Alternatives to Punishment-based Drug Policies. We look forward to your questions and feedback.

Promoting Drug Policy Based on Public Health Principles

The following seven proposed grants seek to use the opportunity of health care reform to increase access to addiction treatment, thus advancing the Campaign for a New Drug Policy's interest in shifting U.S. drug policy from its emphasis on law enforcement to a model based on public health principles. Recent experience and a report commissioned by OSF also have highlighted the advantage of incorporating the addiction treatment and recovery community in efforts to achieve a new drug policy.

The Evergreen Project, Maryland Non-Profit Health Insurance CO-OP, \$30,000 over one year. This is a new grant. The Evergreen Project was co-founded by Peter Beilenson, former Baltimore City Health Commissioner, and Jim Kuchner, previous Executive Director of the Social Entrepreneurship Program at University of Baltimore. The project seeks to establish a health cooperative in Maryland. The establishment of non-profit Cooperatives, a pilot project authorized by health care reform legislation, would offer a lower cost insurance benefit to those people who cannot afford private insurance even with government subsidies, helping to close an insurance and addiction treatment gap for low-income Americans. This grant would allow the Maryland Evergreen Project to assess the feasibility of establishing and sustaining an affordable cooperative. While the most basic Co-op framework is delineated in the law, the creation of rules and regulations determine the true success of implementation; thus advocates are needed to influence the regulatory process to improve access to a high quality, robust health benefit that includes a range of treatment options. Successful efforts by this grantee could provide a national model for the creation of and delivery of addiction treatment by these co-ops.

Legal Action Center (LAC), up to \$800,000 project grant renewal over two years. (\$600,000 from the Campaign for a New Drug Policy; \$200,000 from the Criminal Justice Fund) to continue the efforts of the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap work to expand access to addiction treatment through implementation of national health care reform legislation and minimize the collateral consequences of criminal convictions. Legal Action Center is a nationally recognized advocacy organization that has among other areas, sought to decrease barriers to addiction treatment¹, and to decrease barriers to

¹ Addiction treatment has previously been outside of the main somatic health care systems. However, Congress recognized treatment as part of a holistic health care benefit. Because of deadlines set by the legislation, advocates must quickly educate and

employment, housing and other services for those with the history of a criminal conviction. Campaign for a New Drug Policy funding would support LAC staffing of the Coalition for Whole Health, a national group of mental health and addiction treatment advocates who are seeking to improve access to treatment within newly passed health care reform. CNDP funding would also allow LAC to continue providing technical assistance to three sites that participated in the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap project: New York, New Jersey and Wisconsin. Over the past three years, these sites successfully used communication and advocacy to increase funding for addiction treatment, and help lessen institutional barriers to quality outcomes for those with addictions. The sites are now preparing to use similar strategies, relationships and expertise to improve state level addiction treatment benefits during the implementation of health care reform. As part of this state work, LAC will provide technical assistance to enhance the sites' advocacy work and link their efforts to national health care reform efforts to inform national advocacy and to help integrate national efforts with state work. Criminal Justice Fund support would enable LAC to continue public education, policy analysis and development, and advocacy at the federal and local levels to reduce the legal and statutory barriers to employment, higher education, and public benefits faced by people with criminal records.

Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, Wisconsin, up to \$450,000 over two years. (\$300,000 renewal over two years to support advocacy for the creation of a robust health insurance exchange that will provide quality health care inclusive of an addiction benefit to as many Wisconsinites as possible, and \$150,000 in new funding over one year to support the Community Justice Reinvestment project). CA-PPI is a Milwaukee-based public policy center located within a large social services organization. The health care work is a continuation of successful addiction treatment expansion under the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap project. While the team creates an inclusive health insurance exchange program within Wisconsin, it will develop certain policies that can be exported to advocates in other states. The link with Legal Action Center and the Coalition for Whole Health will ensure this information dissemination. The Community Justice Reinvestment project seeks to enable counties to recover a portion of state funds for reinvestment in local public safety, welfare and services programs by capturing criminal justice and corrections savings through reductions in arrests, prosecutions and convictions. This project addresses severe state and local fiscal crises and, if successful, would provide a model for institutionalized reductions in overincarceration and promote the creation of alternatives to punishment based drug laws.

Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State, \$350,000 renewal over two years to support treatment advocates work around the continued implementation of the Rockefeller drug reform and to ensure state level health care reform includes a robust addiction services component. ASAP was founded in 1996 by a consortium of addiction treatment service providers and seeks to give an advocacy voice to those working within the addiction treatment, recovery and prevention fields. The organization will work within a broader coalition of advocates with an explicit focus on clients that are justice-system involved and working to make sure health care reform addresses this group's unique needs and barrier to care.

National Council of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey Chapter, \$300,000 renewal over two years to use communication and advocacy strategies to promote the inclusion of high quality addiction treatment services in all aspects of health care reform in New Jersey, and to ensure a healthcare-based approach to alternatives to incarceration for drug related offenses within the criminal justice system. NCADD-NJ works with individuals, families and communities affected by addiction. As a Closing the Addiction Treatment grantee, the group successfully removed barriers for people with histories

assist health care administrators, insurance providers, safety net providers and their own constituents in establishing rules and regulation to ensure access to high quality and broadly available addiction care.

of drug convictions to receive TANF benefits and expanded access to community treatment. Its advocates and members seek to improve access to recovery by promoting high quality addiction treatment and recovery services and removing stigma and barriers to recovery such as employment, housing and educational discrimination.

George Washington Center for Health Policy Research, \$200,000 to 250,000 renewal over one year to continue supporting advocacy for the inclusion of a robust addiction treatment benefit within the essential benefit package authorized by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The George Washington health policy team has worked extensively on other health benefits in the past. This funding would allow them to focus specifically on addiction treatment, thus improving the likelihood that health care reform will include a robust addiction treatment benefit. While it is true that the essential benefit must include addiction treatment, there is much work to ensure the benefit includes a full range of addiction benefits—including screening and referral, medications and follow-up care—the same benefits one would expect for any other chronic disease. Strong federal regulations implementing the addiction treatment provision will also provide a strong public health base for justice advocates pursuing alternatives to punishment-based drug policies.

Faces and Voices of Recovery, \$150,000 to \$200,000 over one year to help this national advocacy organization of people in recovery provide technical assistance to state level recovery organizations during health care reform implementation. The actual voices of those in recovery have been a part of the treatment system has rarely been heard. But, this voice is key to creating a system that can truly provide services in a client friendly manner. The technical assistance will help advocates promote the inclusion of treatment into the rules and regulations of health care reform, and will ensure an advocacy base that will be around post health care to advocate for treatment and wrap around support services for the people that health care does not cover.

Promoting Alternatives to Punishment-based Drug Policies

The four proposed grants described below would support drug policy reform efforts to activate affected communities, educate the public on the damaging effects current policies, and support alternatives to punishment-based drug policy.

Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP), \$300,000 general support over two years. Headquartered in the United States, LEAP is an international membership organization of current and former police, corrections officers, and other law enforcement professionals that promotes a regulatory, non-punitive approach to drug use and drug markets. Through collaborations with other drug policy reform and civil rights groups, a wide range of public education work, and other activities, LEAP delivers its message that punishment-based, zero tolerance drug policies erode public safety and threaten civil liberties. LEAP is unique among drug policy reform groups in that it is able to directly counter the influence of pro-drug war law enforcement officials, who too often have had *de facto* veto power over proposed reforms. OSF support will enable LEAP to strengthen its operational structure and pursue its greatly expanded projects and collaborations initiated by its new Executive Director, Neill Franklin.

Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP), \$300,000 general support over two years. SSDP (a current Democracy and Power Fund project grantee) is a campus-based membership organization with its headquarters in Washington, DC. With over 150 campus chapters in the U.S. and internationally, SSDP is one of the largest grassroots drug policy reform membership organizations and the only major group organizing young adults specifically in support of drug policy reform. It is also one of the few drug policy reform organizations with capacity to create standing progressive-conservative coalitions, given the strength of reformist sentiment among young activists across a range of ideological viewpoints. OSF support will enable SSDP to increase the number of college graduates with a core commitment to and

competency in drug policy reform advocacy, as well as strengthen its national and international presence under its new Executive Director, Aaron Houston.

Institute for the Black World 21st Century (IBW21), “Toward a National Dialogue on Decriminalization and Regulation in Black America,” up to \$75,000 project support for one year. IBW21’s mission is to build the capacity of African American communities in the U.S. to work toward “social, political, economic and cultural upliftment.” It seeks project funding for public forums and organizing efforts to engage a broader segment of the African American population in efforts to end punitive drug policies and to challenge policies that disproportionately harm communities of color. OSF funding would intensify ongoing efforts to create a broad movement against punitive drug policies among the most highly impacted segment of the American population.