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Protect Critical LGBTQ+ Health & HIV Prevention Services in Vermont

Pride Center of Vermont (PCVT) is the state's longest-standing LGBTQ+ community organization. For over 10 years, we've partnered with the state to deliver life-saving HIV prevention and health equity services, among many other resources for Vermont's LGBTQ+ communities. **An unexpected 80% cut in state funding for HIV prevention and education services now threatens this critical work.**

The Crisis

This year, PCVT applied for \$300,000 in funding through the CDC's PS 24-0047 Integrated HIV Surveillance and Prevention grant, administered by the Vermont Department of Health and supported by HRSA Ryan White funding. Despite being **level-funded at \$250,000 for the past six years, our award for FY25 was slashed to just \$50,000**—a \$200,000 reduction from previous years and \$250,000 less than requested. This cut was driven by changes in federal funding priorities at the CDC level, and reallocations of funding by the Vermont Department of Health, with no safety net for long-standing providers of LGBTQ+ targeted services.

What's at Risk

This funding directly supports:

- **Two full-time roles:** Health & Wellness Director and Manager
- **Partial support for two others:** Trans Program Manager, Operations & Outreach Coordinator
- All four staff contribute to **HIV testing and prevention**, with two certified and two in training

These positions serve **thousands of LGBTQ+ Vermonters each year**, delivering:

- Free HIV testing and prevention: In 2024, **PCVT provided over 300 HIV tests** between in-person events and distribution of self-tests
- Outreach and education: Last year, **PCVT interfaced with more than 20,000 people statewide** at our own and partner organizations' events, offering safer sex supplies, HIV prevention information, and harm reduction resources
- Trans health navigation and peer support: in 2024, we tripled the number of Trans Program support groups offered
- Harm reduction, healthcare navigation, mental wellness, and community support services

Without restoration, we will need to eliminate core positions, resulting in:

- Major reductions in LGBTQ+ specific HIV testing & outreach
- Limitations on trans health and wellness services
- Service gaps for rural, BIPOC, and low-income LGBTQ+ communities

Our Request

We urge the Legislature to allocate **\$200,000 in bridge funding by July 1, 2025**, to:

- Preserve essential services
- Retain experienced staff
- Prevent avoidable harm while pursuing long-term solutions

This is a critical investment in public health, safety, and Vermont's LGBTQ+ communities. We welcome partnership with lawmakers and agencies to ensure these services remain accessible, effective, and sustainable.