



March 31, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
Chairman, Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Judd Gregg  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a collaboration of organizations representing millions of Americans affected by cancer, strongly supports the \$3 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommended by the Senate-passed FY09 Congressional Budget Resolution. Following five years of flat funding for medical research and cancer control, the Senate-proposed increase is critical to continuing our progress in the fight against cancer. Accordingly, we urge you to support the Senate position during the budget conference deliberations.

Prior investments in cancer research, education, prevention, awareness, treatment, and control at NIH have brought real progress in the fight against cancer. While cancer rates have been dropping for more than a decade, flat funding for cancer research and control in recent years is jeopardizing the progress we have made.

For many of the deadliest cancers, thirty years of progress has been incremental at best. Lung and pancreatic cancer, the first and fourth leading causes of cancer related deaths, are two examples of cancers for which survival rates have not substantially improved. In 1975, the five year survival rates for lung and pancreatic cancer were 13 percent and 2 percent respectively. Over 30 years later, survival rates have barely improved to 16 percent and 5 percent.

Cancer continues to strike one out of every two men and one out of every three women. This year alone, cancer will claim the lives of more than 559,000 Americans, and will cost our nation \$206 billion in lost productivity, human capital, and increased direct medical costs.

While we are mindful of the fiscal challenges faced by the nation, the time has come to renew the federal commitment to fighting this disease. Accordingly, we commend the Senate for adopting a substantial and badly needed funding increase for NIH, and we urge both Houses to accept the

challenge and adopt the Senate-passed funding level as part of the final FY09 Congressional Budget Resolution.

Please help us continue the progress we have made in fighting this disease. If OVAC can be of any assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Daniel E. Smith of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and Chair of the OVAC coalition at (202) 661-5701. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Surgeons  
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology  
Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition  
Colon Cancer Alliance  
CureSearch  
Friends of Cancer Research  
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus  
International Myeloma Foundation  
Lance Armstrong Foundation  
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society  
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support  
Men's Health Network  
National Alliance for Hispanic Health  
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Coalition for Cancer Research  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Ovarian Cancer Coalition  
National Prostate Cancer Coalition  
Nevada Cancer Institute  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Sarcoma Foundation of America  
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists  
Society of Surgical Oncology  
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance  
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network