

October 8, 2004

The Honorable (Senator/Representative)
(Room Number) Office Building
United States Senate/House of Representatives
Washington, DC 2051X

Dear Senator/Representative:

We are writing to urge you to support the funding levels for cancer research and application programs included in the Senate version of the Fiscal Year 2005 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill. One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a collaboration of more than 40 public interest groups representing more than 20 million Americans affected by cancer, was formed to unify the cancer community and present a cohesive message to the Administration and Congress regarding the funding levels necessary to defeat cancer.

The nation's investment in the war on cancer has yielded impressive results – mortality rates have declined 57 percent since the 1971 National Cancer Act – and we continue to make progress on detection, prevention and treatment. However, there is much still to be done. Cancer is the nation's number two killer and remains one of the nation's most urgent health care concerns. This year alone, more than 1.3 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer and more than 556,500 will die from this disease.

We can – and will – improve on these statistics with sustained support for research and application programs at the National Institutes of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration that address the nation's nursing shortage. The Senate version of the LHHS appropriations bills includes higher funding levels for these critical programs. **We strongly urge you to include the funding levels from the Senate bill for these important programs in the final version of the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.**

We recognize the difficult decisions you face due to budgetary constraints. However, investing in the nation's effort to eradicate cancer will reap untold benefits, most notably in lives saved. We ask that you make support for cancer research and application programs and nursing workforce programs a priority. With your support, we can move closer to the goal of winning the war on cancer.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support and Education
Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention (APCaP)
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Association for Cancer Research
American Cancer Society
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Surgeons
American Foundation for Urologic Disease
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO)
American Urological Association
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Breast Cancer Resource Committee, Inc.
Cancer Awareness Program Services
Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation
Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation
Colon Cancer Alliance
Colorectal Cancer Network
Eyes on the Prize
Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus
International Myeloma Foundation
Lance Armstrong Foundation
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Men's Health Network
National Alliance for Hispanic Health
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)
National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention
National Medical Association
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Sarcoma Foundation of America
The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
Trust for America's Health
United Ostomy Association
Us Too! International Prostate Cancer Education & Support Network