



October 16, 2003

The Honorable <Member's Name>
U.S. House/Senate
Washington, DC 2051X

Dear <Member's Name>

One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a collaboration of more than 40 public interest groups representing the millions of Americans impacted 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. We are writing to urge you as a conferee on the fiscal year 2004 (FY04) Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (LHHS) Appropriations bill to make cancer research and its application a priority as you draft a final bill.

Congress has shown exemplary leadership in mounting an aggressive war on cancer, as demonstrated by the significant investment in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget over the past five years. We urge you to continue this commitment to NIH by providing sufficient funding to both sustain existing research and build on past successes. Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, former acting Director of NIH, last year told a hearing that the current pace of discovery could only be maintained with an 8-10% increase, a recommendation consistent with that of the health community. We hope you will take this into account and provide the most funding possible to advance our fight against cancer and other diseases.

Members of Congress in both houses have shown overwhelming support for NIH through votes and Dear Colleague letters. Fifty-two Senators supported an amendment to the FY04 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill that would have added an extra \$1.5 billion to the NIH budget. A Senate letter asking conferees to support greater funding for NIH, initiated by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Susan Collins (R-ME), has been signed by 51 Senators. A similar letter in the House has been signed by 201 Members.

While an investment in medical research is a critical component in the fight against cancer, it is equally important that the application of these discoveries reach the public through prevention, screening and education programs. OVAC strongly supports the seven cancer programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and asks that the funding levels in the Senate bill be adopted in conference. This funding level will enable the CDC programs to reach more people and provide education and early detection services to reduce the number of cancer deaths.

Cancer remains one of the nation's most urgent health care concerns. This year, more than 1.3 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer and more than 556,500 will die from the disease. Sufficient funding for research at NIH and application activities at CDC offer the best hope for reducing these numbers and advancing the nation's war on cancer.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We look forward to working with you to achieve victory in our goal to eradicate cancer.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support and Education (ALCASE)

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

American Urological Association

Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Association of American Cancer Institutes

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

Kidney Cancer Association

Lance Armstrong Foundation

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

Men's Health Network

National Alliance for Hispanic Health

National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations (NABCO)

National Black Caucus of State Legislators

National Melanoma Foundation

National Hispanic Council on Aging

National Patient Advocate Foundation

National Prostate Cancer Coalition

NCCR (National Coalition for Cancer Research)

Ovarian Cancer National Alliance

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network

Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition

Society of Gynecologic Oncologists

The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation

Trust for America's Health

United Ostomy Association

Us Too! International Prostate Cancer Education & Support

Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization