



October 9, 2003

The Honorable Ted Stevens
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stevens:

We are writing today as groups in One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a collaboration of more than 40 public interest groups representing more than 20 million Americans impacted by cancer, to thank you for your leadership as demonstrated by your strong support for the Specter-Harkin-Feinstein amendment to the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act to provide an additional \$1.5 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for Fiscal Year 2004.

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.

Research holds the key to improved prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, and subsequent follow-up care. Congress has shown exemplary bipartisan leadership in mounting an aggressive war on cancer, as demonstrated by the significant investment in the NIH budget over the past five years. We have begun to see some returns on this investment, but are on the cusp of further life-saving breakthroughs. It is critical that NIH receive sufficient funding to sustain and build on past successes as well as ensure continued development of new discoveries that benefit current and future cancer patients.

We applaud your commitment to continuing to ensure that NIH has the resources it needs to meet these goals. Your floor statement in support of the amendment was particularly laudable and deeply appreciated by all in OVAC. We hope to work with you to see that NIH receives sufficient funding in the final bill.

Thank you again for your leadership and vision. You have been a great friend to the cancer community and together, we will make progress in this nation's fight against this devastating disease.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support and Education (ALCASE)
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 Prostate Cancer Coalition
NCCR (National Coalition for Cancer Research)
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
United Ostomy Association
Us Too! International Prostate Cancer Education & Support
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization