



October 9, 2003

The Honorable <Member's Name>
United States Senate
Washington, DC 2051X

Dear <Member>:

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 support for increased funding for National Institutes of Health in the fiscal year 2004 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill. Specifically, we deeply appreciate your signing the Dear Colleague letter to the House and Senate Labor-HHS appropriations subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members asking them to provide additional funds for NIH in the final conference report on the FY04 bill.

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 support of the letter to conference leaders was especially commendable. We hope that you will continue to push for increased funding as the bill moves through conference to a final vote.

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)
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 Network
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization