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HEADLINE: Life-Saving Cancer Research Funding Protected in Spending Bills;
Statement by Daniel E. Smith

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BODY:

Following is a statement by Daniel E. Smith, national vice president for Federal and State government relations:

"The American Cancer Society, the nation's leading voluntary health organization, is pleased Congress finished their work for appropriations funding for fiscal year 2003. Grassroots efforts lead by the Society and the **One Voice Against Cancer** (OVAC) coalition led to thousands of messages sent to Congress, emphasizing the urgency to finish the spending bills and include increases for priority cancer programs.

"Our volunteers kept the pressure on Congress to complete the doubling of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and include adequate funding for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, as well as increase funding for cancer prevention and control programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"While we remain disappointed that the goal of doubling the budget for the NIH by this fiscal year was not reached, Congress did ensure increases for cancer funding that allowed the biomedical community to avert a major crisis if funding came to a halt. Members of Congress gave the NIH one of the largest spending increases included in the Omnibus bill.

"Congress also alleviated the impact of the across-the-board cut; reducing it from a devastating 3.0 percent decrease to less than 0.7 percent, a much more acceptable level to cancer advocates. In addition, though the CDC received level funding last year, the Center received increases this year for seven priority cancer prevention and control programs. We look forward to working with the 108th Congress to make sure cancer priorities are met to continue funding vital cancer research programs and promising treatments to combat this disease."

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 17 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information anytime, call toll free 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit

<http://www.cancer.org>.

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