



July 14, 2006

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator _____:

On behalf of One Voice Against Cancer, a coalition of nearly 40 cancer-related organizations, we are writing in support of key federally funded cancer programs as the Senate begins committee consideration of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2007. Senate support for these programs is even more crucial as both the President and the House Appropriations Committee have called for funding cuts within the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD). Additional cuts have been proposed for cancer control and prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as only level funding for the important nursing workforce development programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Experts at NCI estimate that maintaining current services would require an increase of \$296 million. The funding is essential to maintaining and expanding the world-class network of NCI-designated cancer centers around the country. This year NCI is working under its first funding cut in more than a decade. Unless the Senate takes a strong stand in support of these programs and provides committed leadership, the result will be cuts at NCI for two consecutive years, something that has not happened in more than two decades. These centers conduct cutting edge research that has resulted in new drugs to treat childhood leukemia, advances in imaging technology providing remarkable accuracy in detecting the damage caused by tumors and the development of colon cancer screening tests and treatments that have led to a 90 percent five-year survival rate for colon cancers caught in the earliest, localized stages. These are just a few examples of how our investment in cancer research has paid off and put us on the brink of exponential progress in the fight against cancer.

The Senate also has the opportunity stand in support of programs outside of NCI that have been proven to be effective in preventing and detecting cancer. CDC's state-based cancer control and prevention programs provide vital resources for cancer monitoring and surveillance, breast and cervical cancer screening, state cancer control planning and implementation, and awareness initiatives targeting skin, prostate, colon, ovarian and blood cancers. These already under-funded programs are slated to receive cuts under both the President's and the House plan. This is in addition to cuts for every single cancer program at CDC in the current fiscal year.

Finally, without an adequate supply of nurses, there will not be enough qualified oncology nurses to provide quality, comprehensive cancer care to a growing patient population in need. Nurses are also vital to helping conduct cancer research through clinical trials, and a shortage will slow down the pace of medical research progress. Level funding the nursing workforce programs at HRSA as has been proposed will only hinder our nation's efforts to stem the nursing shortage.

Specific Funding Requests

The cancer community, through the OVAC coalition, has unified around a request of a \$240 million increase to NCI over last year's appropriated levels. That would bring total funding for NCI to just over \$5 billion, which is still far short of the \$5.9 billion proposed by the experts at NCI as part of the director's budget request. Given that cancer costs our nation some \$210 billion annually, the proposed investment makes sound fiscal sense.

In addition to NCI funding, OVAC supports the increases to cancer programs at CDC, efforts to address health disparities through NIH and investments in nursing through the HRSA. Those levels are as follows:

Program	FY06 Conference (in Millions)	OVAC Request	
		Amount (in Millions)	Difference from FY06 (in Millions)
National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities	\$195.41	\$200	\$4.60
Comprehensive Cancer Control Initiative	\$16.94	\$50.0	\$33.06
National Cancer Registries Program	\$48.11	\$65.0	\$16.89
National Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program	\$202.43	\$250.0	\$47.57
Colorectal Cancer Screening, Education & Outreach	\$14.48	\$25.0	\$10.52
Skin Cancer Prevention Programs*	\$2.07	\$5.0	\$2.93
Prostate Cancer Awareness Campaign	\$13.93	\$20.0	\$6.07
Ovarian Cancer Awareness	\$4.52	\$7.5	\$2.98
Geraldine Ferraro Blood Cancer Program	\$4.54	\$5.0	\$0.46
Nurse Reinvestment Act/Nursing Programs (HRSA)	\$149.68	\$175	\$25

Five hundred, sixty-thousand Americans will die from cancer in 2006. This death toll explains why 280 Representatives signed a letter to the President in support of the Administration's goal of eliminating death and suffering from cancer by 2015. We must remember that to win the war on cancer, we must fund the war on cancer throughout the appropriations process.

We would be happy to provide you with additional information about the progress we have made in the war against cancer, and the tremendous promise of our nation's cancer research, prevention, and treatment programs. Continuing progress requires a sustained commitment of federal resources and we respectfully request that you work with your colleagues to secure the highest possible funding levels for the important programs at NIH, CDC, and HRSA. To be successful, we cannot afford to scale back our efforts in this fight.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention

American Academy of Dermatologists

Association

American Association for Cancer Research

American Cancer Society

American College of Surgeons

American Society for Therapeutic

Radiology and Oncology

Asian and Pacific Islander American Health

Forum

Association of American Cancer Institutes

Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network

Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation

C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition

Colon Cancer Alliance

Friends of Cancer Research

Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus

International Myeloma Foundation

Kidney Cancer Association

Lance Armstrong Foundation

Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

Lymphoma Research Foundation

Malecare Prostate Cancer Support

Melanoma Research Foundation

Men's Health Network

National Alliance for Hispanic Health

National Association of Chronic Disease

Directors

National Coalition for Cancer Research

National Foundation for Cancer

Research

National Hispanic Medical Association

(NHMA)

National Prostate Cancer Coalition

Oncology Nursing Society

Ovarian Cancer National Alliance

PanCAN

Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition

Sarcoma Foundation of America

Society of Gynecologic Oncologists

Society of Surgical Oncology

Trust for American's Health

Us TOO International Prostate Cancer

Education and Support Network