



June 23, 2006

The Honorable «FirstName» «LastName»
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative «LastName»:

On behalf of One Voice Against Cancer, a coalition of nearly 40 cancer-related organizations, we are writing to express our deep disappointment in the House version of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2007. The bill as approved by the House Appropriations Committee calls for funding cuts at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD), additional cuts for cancer control and prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as level funding for the nursing workforce development programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). When considering the Budget Resolution, the House of Representatives voted to devote additional funds to the life-saving programs funded in this appropriations bill. Whether funding is provided within the constraints of the current bill or as a result of new funds being made available, it is essential that Congress provide more money for the fight against cancer.

Funding cuts proposed in this bill jeopardize progress in the war against cancer. 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. 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. This is just one example of how our investment in cancer research has paid off and put us on the brink of exponential progress in the fight against cancer. This year, the NCI is working under its first funding cut in more than a decade. If the cuts proposed for FY 2007 are approved it will be the first time in more than 20 years the budget for NCI has been cut in two consecutive years.

Additionally, already under-funded programs have been proven to be effective in preventing and detecting cancer are slated to receive cuts. This is on top of cuts at every single cancer program at CDC in the current fiscal year. 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.

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 will only hinder our nation's efforts to stem the nursing shortage.

Five hundred sixty thousand Americans will die from cancer in 2006 alone. 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.

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 these important programs at NIH, CDC, and HRSA. To be successful, we simply 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