



July 14, 2011

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norman Dicks
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Labor - HHS - Education Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor - HHS - Education Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers, Rep. Dicks, Chairman Rehberg and Rep. DeLauro:

As members of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a coalition of public interest groups representing millions of cancer researchers, patients, survivors and their families throughout the nation, we ask that you continue to make funding for cancer research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) a priority in the FY 2012 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. OVAC recognizes that Congress has a difficult task in balancing priorities within the budget. However, cuts to funding for ongoing cancer research programs would squander the progress made during the past few years and cause lasting harm to cancer patients and their families.

Cancer is the leading threat to health in our country that reaches indiscriminately into every district represented in Congress. The disease is estimated to cause death to more than 570,000 people in the United States this year, or one life taken by cancer every minute. It costs hundreds of billions of dollars each year in medical care and lost productivity. The personal loss for victims of the disease and their families now occurring in every community is immeasurable.

Congressional support for cancer research funding is responsible for much of the progress we have seen in the fight against cancer. Today, nearly 1 in 20 Americans is a cancer survivor, thanks in part to the scientific advances made possible by taxpayers. Major advances have occurred. In the past year alone, federally funded research has led to life-altering cancer research breakthroughs.

For example, recent results from a ten-year lung screening trial sponsored by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) found the possibility that lung cancer deaths could be reduced by 20 percent through spiral CT screening. This breakthrough would not have been possible absent the long term federal investment in this important clinical trial.

Just this past month, clinical trial results were announced that identified two new treatments for melanoma, a disease for which effective treatments have been lacking. NCI funding supported the basic discoveries that were critical to the development of these new treatments.

Despite these successes, significant challenges remain. Progress for some types of cancer has not kept pace with overall improvements in survival rates. Moreover, cancer incidence is projected to nearly double by 2020, particularly among the aging Baby Boomer population.

Lastly, it is important to note the importance of NIH funding to our nation's economy. The NIH budget supports medical research in every state. In turn, these research dollars support local jobs and economic development. In FY 2010, the NIH budget supported nearly 488,000 jobs across the country and produced \$68 billion in new economic activity.

For all of these reasons, we ask you to ensure that funding for cancer research and the NIH remains a top national priority. The members of OVAC thank you for your consideration of this request and stand ready to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Association for Cancer Research
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer
American Society for Clinical Oncology
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research
Colon Cancer Alliance
CureSearch National Childhood Cancer Foundation
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus
International Myeloma Foundation
LIVESTRONG
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support
Men's Health Network
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Brain Tumor Society
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Nevada Cancer Institute
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network

Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network