



November 12, 2014

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Mikulski and Rogers and Ranking Members Shelby and Lowey:

As members of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a coalition of more than 45 public interest groups representing millions of cancer researchers, patients, survivors, and their families throughout the nation, we ask that you make funding for programs essential to the fight against cancer a top priority as you work to complete FY 2015 appropriations. The FY 2015 Senate Labor-HHS-Education bill that was approved by the subcommittee restored cancer research and prevention funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to pre-sequestration levels. We ask that any final FY15 appropriations bill at a minimum provides this amount.

Despite recent advances, cancer remains a major public health crisis. This year alone, an estimated 1.6 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer, 585,000 people in the U.S. will die from the disease, and it will cost our economy an estimated \$216 billion. Further, cancer incidence is projected to nearly double by 2020, particularly among the aging Baby Boomer population. The signs of progress have also been painfully elusive for some childhood and adult cancers; treatment options are lacking for some of these diseases or have significant long-term side effects. However, significant progress in the fight against cancer is within reach if this effort is adequately resourced.

Unfortunately, progress in the fight against cancer has been slowed not just by steep spending cuts in FY13, but from a decade of stagnant funding. When accounting for inflation, the NIH budget has dropped 22 percent (\$6 billion) since 2003; the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) budget has deteriorated even more – 24.7 percent (\$1.1 billion). The reason for this difference is that cancer research funding as a share of the NIH budget

has steadily declined for more than a decade. In the early 2000s, the NIH funded nearly one out of three grant applications overall; last year the rate was about one in six (16.8 percent); meanwhile, the success rate for NCI research grant applications has fallen to just one in seven (13.7 percent). Many cancer researchers are frustrated that they are limited by a lack of resources at a time when the scientific opportunities for breakthroughs are so promising.

Likewise, state health departments have been unable to fully implement cancer control strategies as a result of inadequate funding. States have been forced to scale back on prevention programs and reduce the number of screenings they provide as funding for CDC cancer programs has not kept up with their needs.

Federal cancer research and prevention funding saves lives and promotes economic growth at a time when our country is still desperate to do both. Please provide the funding necessary to getting the fight against cancer back on track in FY 2015. We ask that at a minimum, the funding lost in the past few years for cancer research, prevention, nursing, and other important programs that play a direct role in reducing cancer incidence and mortality be restored. The members of OVAC thank you for your consideration of this request and stand ready to support your efforts to promote research and prevention funding.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy  
Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Sexual Health Association  
American Society for Radiation Oncology  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Association of Community Cancer Centers  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
C-Change  
Cancer Support Community  
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research  
Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy  
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer  
Esophageal Cancer Action Network  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
Friends of Cancer Research  
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association  
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus

International Myeloma Foundation  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
LIVESTRONG Foundation  
Lung Cancer Alliance  
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support  
Men's Health Network  
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation  
The MPN Research Foundation  
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Brain Tumor Society  
National Cervical Cancer Coalition  
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Preventing Colorectal Cancer  
Sarcoma Foundation of America  
Society of Gynecologic Oncology  
St. Baldrick's Foundation  
Susan G. Komen  
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network