



March 31, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kent Conrad
Chairman, Committee on the Budget
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Judd Gregg
Committee on the Budget
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a collaboration of organizations representing millions of Americans affected by cancer, strongly supports the \$3 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommended by the Senate-passed FY09 Congressional Budget Resolution. Following five years of flat funding for medical research and cancer control, the Senate-proposed increase is critical to continuing our progress in the fight against cancer. Accordingly, we urge you to support the Senate position during the budget conference deliberations.

Prior investments in cancer research, education, prevention, awareness, treatment, and control at NIH have brought real progress in the fight against cancer. While cancer rates have been dropping for more than a decade, flat funding for cancer research and control in recent years is jeopardizing the progress we have made.

For many of the deadliest cancers, thirty years of progress has been incremental at best. Lung and pancreatic cancer, the first and fourth leading causes of cancer related deaths, are two examples of cancers for which survival rates have not substantially improved. In 1975, the five year survival rates for lung and pancreatic cancer were 13 percent and 2 percent respectively. Over 30 years later, survival rates have barely improved to 16 percent and 5 percent.

Cancer continues to strike one out of every two men and one out of every three women. This year alone, cancer will claim the lives of more than 559,000 Americans, and will cost our nation \$206 billion in lost productivity, human capital, and increased direct medical costs.

While we are mindful of the fiscal challenges faced by the nation, the time has come to renew the federal commitment to fighting this disease. Accordingly, we commend the Senate for adopting a substantial and badly needed funding increase for NIH, and we urge both Houses to accept the

challenge and adopt the Senate-passed funding level as part of the final FY09 Congressional Budget Resolution.

Please help us continue the progress we have made in fighting this disease. If OVAC can be of any assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Daniel E. Smith of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and Chair of the OVAC coalition at (202) 661-5701. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

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
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology
Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition
Colon Cancer Alliance
CureSearch
Friends of Cancer Research
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus
International Myeloma Foundation
Lance Armstrong Foundation
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support
Men's Health Network
National Alliance for Hispanic Health
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Coalition for Cancer Research
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Ovarian Cancer Coalition
National Prostate Cancer Coalition
Nevada Cancer Institute
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
Society of Surgical Oncology
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network