



April 30, 2013

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services
Education and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Republican
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski, Senator Shelby, Chairman Harkin, and Senator Moran:

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 make funding for programs essential to the fight against cancer a top priority in the FY 2014 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. OVAC recognizes that Congress has a difficult task in balancing competing budget priorities. However, the current cuts to existing cancer research and prevention programs risk us losing the progress made during the past few years and could cause lasting harm to cancer patients and their families. We ask that you restore the funding lost over the past year and work to put these programs on a path toward sustainable growth.

Cancer Research – The Front Line in the Fight Against Cancer

Specifically, OVAC is requesting that you provide the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with a budget of at least \$32 billion in FY 2014, including \$5.24 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI), \$286 million for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), and \$150 million for the National Institute on Nursing Research (NINR).

Cancer is the leading threat to health in our country that reaches indiscriminately into every district represented in Congress. The disease will kill more than 580,000 people in the United States this year, or one life taken by cancer every minute. It is estimated more than 1,660,000 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in 2013. Cancer also costs our nation 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.

Despite these challenges, we are making progress, due in large part to the research supported through the NIH. This work has contributed to virtually every major breakthrough in the fight against cancer. It has contributed to the overall reduction in cancer incidence and mortality, and an improved quality of life for survivors, since the 1990s.

It is also 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 further scientific institutions and enterprises, skilled job creation and economic development. Last year the NIH budget helped support more than 400,000 jobs across the country and produced nearly \$58 billion in economic growth.

Cancer Prevention and Early Detection – Putting Research Advances into Practice

Half of the 580,000 deaths that will occur from cancer this year could have been avoided through prevention: by eliminating tobacco use, encouraging better diet and exercise, and giving all Americans access to cancer screening and preventive medicine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cancer control programs support each of these cancer prevention strategies, as well as surveillance and other educational and awareness initiatives in every state. Collectively, the CDC cancer programs are the foundation of our country's cancer prevention efforts.

We urge you to reject the funding cuts as laid out in the President's budget for cancer prevention and screening programs at the CDC. We ask that you protect funding for cancer programs that have a proven record of success for early detection, prevention, education, and data collection.

If the cuts the President proposed go into effect, the CDC's Division of Cancer Control and Prevention will be cut by more than 10 percent. This year, due to the sequestration cuts, we will likely see 32,000 fewer breast and cervical cancer screenings for women than last year. Any further funding cuts will have devastating consequences to women who rely on this proven program for access to educational materials and screening programs. CDC funding for nationwide outreach and education programs is also critical to our cancer prevention efforts. This funding supports public awareness campaigns, the development of culturally appropriate materials, as well as patient and provider educational resources on a range of topics for breast, gynecologic, ovarian, blood, skin and prostate cancers.

Oncology Nursing – Caring for Patients and Conducting Research

Lastly, OVAC asks you to support a higher rate of nursing scholarships and loan repayment applications, as well as other essential programs to sustain our nation's nursing workforce. Oncology nurses are on the front lines in the provision of quality care for cancer patients – administering chemotherapy, managing patient therapies and side-effects, providing treatment education and counseling to patients and family members. OVAC requests that the Health Resources and Services Administration Title VIII Nursing Programs receive \$251 million in FY 2014.

For all of these reasons, we ask you to ensure that the fight against cancer remains a top national priority. We ask that 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 funding.

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 Commission on Cancer
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Social Health Association
American Society of 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
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 Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions
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
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network