



March 15, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Members Murray and Cole:

As members of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a broad coalition of public interest groups representing millions of cancer patients, researchers, providers, survivors and their families, we are writing regarding funding for cancer research and prevention priorities for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY 2020).

The more than 200 diseases that we call “cancer” take a tremendous toll on our nation. It is estimated that more than 1.7 million people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with cancer this year. Additionally, more than 606,000 Americans will die from the disease in 2019, which translates to more than 1,660 people a day. Recent estimates show that cancer costs the U.S. economy more than \$216 billion annually in direct treatment costs and lost productivity, a number that will increase dramatically as incidence rates climb. Additionally, it has been projected that 2.1 million people in the U.S. will be diagnosed in 2030.

For the last 50 years, every major medical breakthrough in cancer can be traced back to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI). We know that investment in research at the NIH and NCI leads to lives saved.

Because of the previous investment in cancer research, more than 15.5 million American cancer survivors are alive today, and we are enjoying a quarter century of sustained declines in cancer mortality. As of 2016, the cancer death rate for men and women combined has fallen 27 percent from its peak in 1991. This decline translates to about 1.5 percent per year and more than 2.6 million deaths avoided between 1991 and 2016.

Additionally, more than 80 percent of federal funding for the NIH and NCI is spent on biomedical research projects at local research facilities across the country. In FY 2018, the NIH provided over \$28 billion in extramural research to scientists in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. NIH research funding also supported more than 433,000 jobs and nearly \$74 billion in economic activity last year.

Thanks to your leadership, significant progress has been made to reduce the loss of purchasing power experienced by the NIH and NCI since FY 2003, which marked the end of the five-year doubling of NIH. However, NIH funding is still 8.4 percent less than what it would have been if funding had simply kept up with biomedical inflation.

With increases in federal investment in medical research over the last four fiscal years and the passage of the 21st Century Cures Act that included funding for the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative, Congress has demonstrated its bipartisan support for cancer research. However, Moonshot funding is actually a small percentage of NCI's total budget and in FY 2020 the funding going to NCI for this initiative will be cut almost in half, from \$400 million in FY 2019 to \$195 million in FY 2020. Even counting the Cancer Moonshot, NCI's budget lags 15.6 percent, or \$1.1 billion, below what it would have been if funding had kept pace with biomedical inflation since FY 2003.

To continue the progress that has led to medical breakthroughs for treatment and therapies for millions of cancer patients, NIH and NCI need an increased, sustainable federal investment. Therefore, OVAC urges Congress to provide the NIH with at least a \$2.5 billion increase in FY 2020. Additionally, we urge you to provide at least a \$378 million increase for NCI, for a total of \$6.522 billion, as reflected in the Professional Judgment Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2020 provided to Congress by the NCI.

Although great progress has been seen in the fight against cancer, not all populations are benefitting from this progress. That's why the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to play a key role in bringing evidence-based interventions developed by NIH and NCI to underserved groups. This division provides vital resources to every state for cancer monitoring and surveillance, state cancer control

planning and implementation, survivorship programs, and screening and awareness initiatives targeting breast, cervical, skin, prostate, colon, and ovarian cancers.

However, in sharp contrast to NIH, funding for the DCPC has remained virtually flat for nine years, rising just \$1.2 million from FY 2010 (\$370.3 million) to FY 2019 (\$371.5 million). Congress has a rare opportunity to reverse this trend. OVAC urges Congress to provide at least \$555 million to CDC's evidence-based cancer prevention and control programs, which are saving lives in communities across the country.

Within the DCPC, OVAC requests at least \$70 million, an increase of \$19 million, for the National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR), which provides technical, operational, and financial support for states to manage cancer registries. The more accessible and usable registry data is, the more impact it can have on public health. CDC is working to enhance the use of NPCR cancer registry data through additional data collection, expanded electronic reporting, and innovative public health applications. Additional funding would allow the CDC to create a cloud-based system that would record data in real time and eliminate the current two-year lag in reporting.

Additionally, oncology nurses are on the front lines when it comes to providing quality cancer care and contribute significantly to cancer research. More funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration's nurse training programs is necessary to support more nursing scholarships and loan repayment applications and to address the current and future nursing workforce shortage.

OVAC also understands the critical role of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in fostering the development of new cancer treatments and urges robust funding for its activities over-all. The 21st Century Cures Act authorized the establishment of the FDA Oncology Center of Excellence (OCE), the first of several planned inter-center institutes to help coordinate activities in major disease areas. OVAC urges Congress to prioritize funding for the OCE and FDA overall in FY 2020.

Lastly, OVAC also recognizes the value of the Department of Defense Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) in supporting innovative and lifesaving cancer research. The CDMRP funds high-impact research for cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and survivorship to support service members, their families, and the American public at-large.

Below please find an overview of OVAC's program level requests:

National Institutes of Health (NIH) - \$41.584 billion, including:

- National Cancer Institute (NCI): *\$6.522 billion*
- National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD): *\$331 million*
- National Institute on Nursing Research (NINR): *\$171 million*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Cancer Programs - \$555 million, including:

- National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program: *\$50 million*
- National Program of Cancer Registries: *\$70 million*
- National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program: *\$275 million*
- Colorectal Cancer Control Program: *\$70 million*
- National Skin Cancer Prevention Education Program: *\$5 million*
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Campaign: *\$35 million*
- Ovarian Cancer Control Initiative: *\$11 million*
- Gynecologic Cancer and Education and Awareness (Johanna's Law): *\$12 million*
- Cancer Survivorship Resource Center: *\$900,000*

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

- Title VIII Nursing Programs: *\$266 million*

Once again, thank you for your continued leadership on funding issues important in the fight against cancer. Funding for cancer research, prevention, survivorship, nursing, and the FDA must continue to be top budget priorities in order to increase the pace of progress in the fight against cancer. OVAC once again calls on Congress to sustain our nation's commitment to cancer research and prevention by increasing support for these efforts.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Dermatology
Association
American Association for Cancer
Research
American Cancer Society Cancer Action
Network
American College of Surgeons
Commission on Cancer
American Society for Radiation
Oncology
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Urological Association
Association of American Cancer
Institutes
Bladder Cancer Action Network

Cancer Support Community
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer
Research
Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy
Deadliest Cancers Coalition
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing
Stomach Cancer
Dermatology Nurses' Association
Esophageal Cancer Action Network
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy
Association
Intercultural Cancer Coalition
International Myeloma Foundation

Kidney Cancer Action Network
LIVESTRONG Foundation
Lung Cancer Alliance
LUNgevity Foundation
Men's Health Network
Mesothelioma Applied Research
Foundation
National Alliance of State Prostate
Cancer Coalitions
National Association of Chronic Disease
Directors
National Brain Tumor Society
National Cancer Registrars Association
North American Association of Central
Cancer Registries, Inc. (NAACCR)
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance

Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Prostate Conditions Education Council
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Susan G. Komen
The Life Raft Group
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
The MPN Research Foundation
Triage Cancer
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer
Education and Support Network
ZERO – The End of Prostate Cancer