



June 18, 2015

The Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton, Representative Pallone and Representative DeGette:

As members of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a broad coalition of cancer-related organizations that focuses on federal investment in cancer research, we are pleased to offer our support for the 21st Century Cures Act. As a coalition, OVAC focuses exclusively on increasing federal funding for cancer research and other programs essential to the fight against cancer. For this reason, we commend you for the inclusion of funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as well as the Food and Drug Administration in the 21st Century Cures Act. Many OVAC members are reaching out to you directly to comment on other aspects of the bill.

It is estimated that almost 1.7 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer this year. More than 589,000 Americans will die from the disease in 2015, and it will cost our economy an estimated \$216 billion in direct treatment costs and lost productivity. Annual cancer incidence rates are also projected to increase by 31 percent over the next decade, growing to 2.1 million people diagnosed in 2025.

For decades, research conducted at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has played a key role in almost every major cancer prevention, detection, and treatment discovery. As a direct result of this research, overall cancer mortality rates have been in decline since the mid-1990s, and there are now more than 14.5 million cancer survivors living in the U.S. Unfortunately, progress has been painfully elusive for some childhood and adult cancers. Yet, when adjusting for inflation, NIH's budget has decreased by more than \$6.5 billion since FY 2003.

As we usher in an era of research marked by precision medicine and immunotherapies that will help fight some of the deadliest and most aggressive forms of cancer, it is vital that we do everything we can to guarantee that the researchers engaged in these critical advancements have the money necessary to continue their work, in addition to funding for new research projects. To ensure that the research being supported today yields the cancer treatment of tomorrow, Congress must sustain and expand the support it is currently providing.

It is for this reason that OVAC was very pleased to see the funding provisions included in the 21st Century Cures Act. The NIH Innovation Fund, which will provide the NIH with \$10 billion of mandatory funding over five years, will help to ensure that the current momentum in research is not hindered by potential budget limitations. We appreciate your efforts to ensure that this fund does not supplant existing appropriations for NIH, but rather supplements them.

On behalf of the millions of researchers, physicians, pharmacists, nurses, patients, and survivors represented by OVAC, we commend your momentous effort to accelerate the pace of medical discovery.

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 of Clinical Oncology
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Bladder Cancer Action Network
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
Esophageal Cancer Action Network
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Intercultural Cultural Cancer Council Caucus
International Myeloma Foundation
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
The LIVESTRONG Foundation
Lung Cancer Alliance
Men's Health Network
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
National Brain Tumor Society
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
Sarcoma Foundation of America
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Susan G. Komen
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network

