



February 4, 2015

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Higgins
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Benjamin Cardin
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congresswoman DeLauro, Congressman Higgins, Senator Mikulski, and Senator Cardin:

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 offer our support for H.R. 531 and S. 318, the Accelerating Biomedical Research Act. Thank you for your efforts to restore investment in the National Institutes of Health (NIH). OVAC strongly supports funding for the NIH and advocates for multiple institutes and centers, though increased funding for cancer research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) within the NIH is our top priority.

Congress' past support for cancer research and prevention has led to better ways to prevent, detect, and treat some forms of cancer. As a result, more people are living longer and better after diagnosis, but cancer remains a public health crisis. This year alone, an estimated 1.65 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer, 589,000 people in the U.S. will die from the disease, and it will cost our economy an estimated \$216 billion. Further, the number of Americans diagnosed with cancer, particularly among the aging Baby Boomer population, is expected to grow dramatically over the next decade with more than 2.1 million cancer diagnoses projected in 2025. Equally concerning is the lack of progress for some childhood and adult cancers, where treatment options are lacking for some of these diseases or have significant long-term side effects. In order to accelerate progress in the fight against cancer, the availability of resources must keep up with the scientific opportunities – such as more precise and personalized cancer therapies – that are within our reach.

As you are likely aware, the NIH budget has dropped 24 percent (\$6.5 billion) since 2003 when accounting for inflation; NCI's budget has been cut even more – 26.4 percent (\$1.2 billion). Restoring NIH's lost purchasing power and providing researchers with the funds needed to capitalize of the scientific opportunities of today is of the utmost importance.

The FY 2016 budget request for the NIH lays out a proposal for a new and expanded Precision Medicine Initiative that calls for a significant investment to improve our understanding of the causes of and potential therapies for cancer and other diseases. An innovative research initiative such as this, along with a continued need to support ongoing research, requires a greater investment in medical research.

We commend your efforts to accelerate medical research and thank you for your leadership on this important issue. The members of OVAC stand ready to support your efforts to get research funding back on track.

Sincerely,

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Action to Cure Kidney Cancer (ACKC)
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Sexual Health Association
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research
Intercultural Cancer Caucus
LIVESTRONG Foundation
Malecare Cancer Support
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
MPN Research Foundation
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Society for Gynecologic Oncology
The St. Baldrick's Foundation