

# CANCER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

A PATIENT-CENTERED FORUM OF NATIONAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS  
ADDRESSING PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN CANCER

April 6, 2011

Dear Senator/Representative:

As negotiations continue on the spending bill for fiscal year 2011, we strongly urge you not to reduce funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI). One in 20 Americans is a cancer survivor, and more than 1.5 million Americans will receive a cancer diagnosis this year. But those dramatic numbers understate the impact of cancer, as all American families are touched by cancer directly or through family, friends, and co-workers. All of those affected by cancer have benefited from the nation's investment in cancer research and are counting on a continued federal commitment to cancer research and improvement in care.

Why is strong federal support for NIH and NCI so important to Americans? There has been progress in developing new and improved treatments for some cancers, as detailed in the *Annual Report to the Nation on the Status of Cancer*. However, treatments are woefully inadequate for many cancers, the side effects of some existing treatments are severe, and those who survive cancer and cancer treatment live with significant and sometimes life-changing late and long-term effects. Research is the key to a deeper understanding of cancer and development of better treatments. Thus, research is also the key to a longer, happier, and more productive life with cancer.

A sustained and consistent federal commitment to NIH and NCI is critical to research progress. The federal government has taken an important leadership role in basic, translational, and clinical research, in ways that are complementary to, and collaborative with, the cancer research investment of private and public research institutions, private research foundations, and biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. A diminished commitment by the federal government will have devastating effects, threatening basic research progress and undermining these important public-private partnerships for development of better treatments.

If funding for NIH and NCI is cut, the effects will be felt in homes, schools, workplaces, laboratories, and hospitals across the nation. We ask for your support of NIH and NCI to prevent:

- Interruption of dozens of clinical trials that are testing new treatments for cancer.
- Discontinuation of research studies undertaken in institutions in every state of the nation, studies that are yielding information about cancer and strategies for developing new treatments.
- Abandonment of efforts to develop interventions to help cancer survivors live with the long-term effects of their treatment.

- Economic dislocation in institutions, laboratories, and communities across the country, as investigators dedicated to the fight against cancer and their research support teams lose their jobs.

The path toward better cancer treatments is a difficult one, as the disease is really hundreds of diseases, each with its own scientific challenges. Progress to date can be attributed significantly to the strong and sustained federal commitment of research dollars. Millions of Americans living with cancer and their families and friends count on you to protect and advance this vital investment in the national cancer research effort.

Sincerely,

### **Cancer Leadership Council**

American Society for Radiation Oncology  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy  
Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups  
College of American Pathologists  
Education Network to Advance Cancer Clinical Trials (ENACCT)  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
International Myeloma Foundation  
Kidney Cancer Association  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
LIVESTRONG  
Lymphoma Research Foundation  
Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Comprehensive Cancer Network  
National Lung Cancer Partnership  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
Prevent Cancer Foundation  
Sarcoma Foundation of America  
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education & Support Network  
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization