



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

April 28, 2009

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Brown:

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for S. 488, the Access to Cancer Clinical Trials Act of 2009. The undersigned cancer patient, provider, and research organizations have been engaged for almost two decades in efforts to guarantee cancer patients access to care in clinical trials. Enactment of S. 488 would provide such access for many Americans.

Care in a clinical trial often represents the best, or sometimes the only, option for quality care. Unfortunately, reimbursement barriers prevent many Americans from enrolling in a trial or from even considering a trial as a treatment option. Your legislation will address that payment obstacle and will also ensure that cancer clinical research advances. Only if the clinical research effort proceeds without impediment can questions about effective treatments be answered and new treatments developed.

We applaud the inclusion in S. 488 of a provision establishing coverage of cancer clinical trials in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Our organizations hear complaints from federal employees nationwide who are denied access to care in trials. The FEHB program, often hailed as a model for coverage, falls short in terms of clinical trials coverage. Your legislation would address that shortcoming.

As the legislative process moves forward, we hope you will consider incorporating in S. 488 the standards and definitions for coverage of clinical trials, including the standard for coverage of complications arising from care in trials, as they appear in the current Medicare clinical trials coverage policy.

Thank you again for introduction of the Access to Cancer Clinical Trials Act. We stand ready to assist you in enacting this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Cancer Leadership Council

American Cancer Society Cancer Action
Network
American Psychosocial Oncology
Society
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society for Radiation
Oncology
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Breast Cancer Network of Strength
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition
Cancer Care
The Children's Cause for Cancer
Advocacy
Coalition of Cancer Cooperative Groups
International Myeloma Foundation
Lance Armstrong Foundation
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Lymphoma Research Foundation
Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation
National Coalition for Cancer
Survivorship
National Comprehensive Cancer
Network
National Lung Cancer Partnership
National Patient Advocate Foundation
North American Brain Tumor Coalition
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer
Education and Support Network
The Wellness Community