



February 9, 2009

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Representative Lewis:

One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a coalition of cancer-related organizations representing millions of Americans engaged in the fight against cancer, thanks you for your continued leadership in support of federally funded cancer programs that seek to understand, prevent, and treat cancer. The passage of H.R. 1, the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009*, is an important step toward reducing the impact of cancer. OVAC is joined by Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C), a group devoted to accelerating cancer research that will develop new therapies, in supporting this effort.

During the conference, we ask you to support the \$10 billion provided in the Senate's version of the bill for life-saving research at the National Institutes of Health and the \$3 billion provided in the House-passed version for public health prevention and wellness programs.

Over the past twenty years, we have witnessed tremendous advances in the fight against some types of cancer as a result of our federal commitment to cancer research and programs that encourage prevention and early detection. This occurred as a result of a long-term commitment of essential resources. While the overall rate of death from cancer has been dropping for more than a decade, for many people and many of the

deadliest cancers, this progress has been incremental at best. Furthermore, recent cuts to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) budget, coupled with the fact that for more than five years the overall National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget has failed to keep up with biomedical inflation, have resulted in the scaling back or elimination of promising cancer research programs. This failure of funding for cancer research and prevention and screening programs at the NIH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) jeopardizing the overall progress we have made.

We are mindful of the fiscal challenges faced by the nation and see the investment in biomedical research as an opportunity to aid local economies across the country. NIH funding supports laboratories that function like small businesses, purchasing goods and services, and employing technical and support staff. The lack of adequate funding is having a detrimental effect on the local economies where the research is being conducted. According to a recent study by Families USA, on average, in FY 2007, each dollar of NIH funding generated more than twice as much in state economic output. That is, an overall investment of \$22.846 billion from NIH generated a total of \$50.537 billion in new state business activity in the form of increased output of goods and services.

Scientists, physicians, and health care professionals are an essential component of the American workforce and are one of the fastest growing sectors of the American economy. It is important that our nation not only face the critical economic challenges in the upcoming months, but that it ensures that this investment stimulates and sustains a scientific workforce in the years to come. Doing so will advance promising scientific endeavors, promote American ingenuity and global competitiveness, and ultimately save lives. The funding included in this bill will support cancer centers and researchers across the country and help them achieve results that will improve how we prevent, diagnose and treat cancer.

We are also encouraged by the House's critical investment in improving the nation's public health. The impact of chronic disease on lost workdays and lower employee productivity resulted in an annual economic loss in the US of over \$1 trillion in 2003.

The CDC serves as the backbone of our healthcare infrastructure, supporting jobs important to our state and local economies, as well as providing services to individuals in communities across the nation. A \$500M investment in prevention at CDC creates 2,000 jobs directly in communities across the country and countless indirect jobs as well. Cancer screening dollars will flow into communities in every state to hire doctors, nurses, counselors, health technicians, community outreach and administrative staff. This funding will also save lives – women need mammograms and everyone over 50 needs to be screened for colon cancer - at a time when more Americans are going without routine medical care.

Federally funded medical research gave us the PAP test to detect cervical cancer. All cancers need screening tools. NIH research and breakthroughs have saved millions of lives over the past thirty years, but there are still too many cancer patients waiting for treatment options. Support for the Senate-passed NIH funding levels creates the greatest

opportunity for the development of the next major breakthrough in cancer treatment and provides maximum accessibility to preventive, early detection, and educational services.

We thought you might be interested in seeing the compelling opinion article by Patrick Swayze that appeared in the *Outlook* section of yesterday's Washington Post.

The member organizations of OVAC and SU2C, and coalition advocates and volunteers are prepared to assist in every way we can to support efforts to strengthen our nation's cancer programs. We stand ready to work with our champions in Congress to support the economic recovery bill and the life-saving funding for federal cancer programs.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
American College of Surgeons  
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network  
C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition  
Colon Cancer Alliance  
CureSearch National Childhood Cancer Foundation  
Friends of Cancer Research  
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus  
International Myeloma Foundation  
Lance Armstrong Foundation  
Leukemia and Lymphoma Society  
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support  
Men's Health Network  
National Alliance for Hispanic Health  
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer Coalitions  
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
National Cervical Cancer Coalition  
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Ovarian Cancer Coalition  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
Nevada Cancer Institute  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN)  
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition  
Sarcoma Foundation of America

Society of Gynecologic Oncologists

Society of Surgical Oncology

Stand Up To Cancer (SU2C)

Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance

Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network

ZERO -- The Project to End Prostate Cancer