



December 8, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman,
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Harkin, Senator Shelby, Chairman Rehberg, and Rep. DeLauro:

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 urge you to work toward the timely completion of a FY 2012 Labor-HHS appropriations bill, and to ensure that funding for cancer research and prevention remains a priority as you finish the FY 2012 appropriations process.

Current and past investments in cancer research and control programs through the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control, and Health Resources and Services Administration are creating dramatic new opportunities in research and prevention, spurring innovation and development at thousands of institutions across the country. Major advances in cancer research are happening at a faster pace than ever before. In the past year alone, federally funded research has led to life-altering cancer research breakthroughs in lung and skin cancer. As a result of these and other research breakthroughs, along with efforts in prevention and cancer control, we continue to see a steady decline in cancer death rates. However, the ability to sustain these advances will be in jeopardy absent adequate funding. Continued funding for these programs will insure that the progress made during the past few years in the fight against cancer is not squandered.

Additionally, prevention by itself has the potential to transform our health system in new and innovative ways that will lead to a healthier population and lower health care costs. We request that funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund be maintained because we know that through tobacco control, better nutrition and physical activity, and access to early detection and treatment we can save hundreds of thousands of lives every year.

A Continuing Resolution creates uncertainty, which hurts the fight against cancer. The members of OVAC hope that the committee will be able to complete its work on the FY2012 Labor-HHS appropriations bill while continuing to make cancer a priority. We thank you for your consideration of this request and stand ready to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Prostate Cancer Prevention
American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Association for Cancer Research
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer
American Society for Clinical Oncology
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research
CureSearch for Children's Cancer
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus
International Myeloma Foundation
LIVESTRONG
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support
Men's Health Network
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
National Brain Tumor Society
National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR)
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Nevada Cancer Institute
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network