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Johanns Amendment Would Undermine Historic Investment in Prevention

Washington, D.C. – September 13, 2010 – The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) sent a letter to senators today urging them to vote against an amendment to the Small Business Jobs Credit Act that would effectively strip dedicated prevention funding from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Before PPACA was enacted, roughly three percent of the federal budget was dedicated to keeping our nation healthy and stopping diseases such as cancer before they start. Passage of the Johanns Amendment would reverse efforts to transform the old ‘sick care’ system by nearly eliminating all of the funding in the newly created Prevention and Public Health Fund.

The text of the letter from Christopher W. Hansen, president of ACS CAN, follows:

September 13, 2010

Dear Senator:

Acting on behalf of the millions of cancer patients, survivors and their families, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is opposed to the pending Johanns amendment to H.R. 5297, the Small Business Jobs and Credit Act. The Johanns amendment would eliminate nearly all of the funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund enacted as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), and furthermore would result in fewer Americans having access to affordable insurance coverage.

The Prevention and Public Health Fund provides a dedicated stream of resources to pay for much-needed cancer screenings, tobacco cessation and other community-based health programs enacted to address the growing problem of obesity.

One thousand five hundred Americans die every day from cancer. Sixty percent of these cancer deaths could be prevented with better prevention and early detection strategies. Congress recognized this fact by making a historic investment in cancer prevention in PPACA that will transform what has been until now a national “sick care system” into a real “health care system” by addressing potential disease before it becomes life-threatening. Elimination of this prevention funding would be a major setback, jeopardizing our national strategy, not just against cancer, but against other killer diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Again, ACS CAN urges you to vote against the Johanns amendment, and we very much appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Christopher W. Hansen

ACS CAN, the leading voice of patients in the health care debate, is working to ensure that the Affordable Care Act is implemented as strongly as possible for cancer patients, survivors and caregivers. For more information, visit <http://www.acscan.org/healthcare>.

ACS CAN, the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit www.acscan.org.