

The
N•C•C•R

A coalition of cancer organizations
joining together to advocate for
cancer research

November 3, 2008

Member Organizations

*Albert and Mary
Lasker Foundation*

*American Association
for Cancer Research*

American Cancer Society, Inc.

*American College
of Radiology*

*American Society for Therapeutic
Radiology and Oncology*

*American Society of
Clinical Oncology*

*American Society
of Hematology*

*Association of American
Cancer Institutes*

*Cancer Research
and Prevention Foundation*

*Cancer Treatment
Research Foundation*

*Candlelighters
Childhood Cancer
Foundation*

*Coalition of Cancer
Cooperative Groups*

*CureSearch National
Childhood Cancer Foundation*

*International Cancer
Advocacy Network*

International Myeloma Foundation

Kidney Cancer Association

*The Leukemia and
Lymphoma Society*

*The Lustgarten Foundation for
Pancreatic Cancer Research*

Oncology Nursing Society

*Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
PanCAN*

Prostate Cancer Foundation

Radiation Research Society

Society of Nuclear Medicine

*The Society of
Gynecologic Oncologists*

*The V Foundation for
Cancer Research*

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

The National Coalition for Cancer Research (NCCR) is a coalition of 24 national cancer research, cancer care and patient organizations representing cancer patients, survivors and families; cancer researchers, nurses and physicians; and cancer hospitals, centers, clinics and specialized research institutions. The NCCR directs its efforts toward educating public officials and policy makers about the impact of specific federal legislation, regulations and public policy on cancer research.

The undersigned member organizations are writing to express our strong support for including \$1.9 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the economic stimulus legislation that we understand will likely be considered prior to the end of the year. This amount would increase the discretionary budget authority provided to NIH through the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee to \$31.1 billion in FY 2009, an increase of approximately 6.5 percent.

NCCR understands and appreciates the budgetary constraints currently facing our nation. However, NCCR also believes that advances in biomedical research must remain a very high national priority. While significant advances have been made in research and treatment for the more than 200 diseases we know as cancer, it remains one of the most urgent health care issues facing our country. Cancer is now the second leading cause of death in the United States. One in two males and one in three females in the United States will develop cancer in their lifetime. In 2008, the American Cancer Society estimates that approximately 1.44 million of our citizens will be informed they have cancer and 566,000 Americans are expected to die from the disease.

While these statistics are truly sobering, the overall 5-year relative cancer survival rates have doubled since 1971, with rates varying greatly by cancer type and stage of diagnosis. The American Cancer Society estimates that approximately 10.8 million Americans with a history of cancer were alive in January, 2004. Furthermore, advances in biomedical research have led to the development of targeted cancer therapies that are helping many cancer patients live longer and more productive lives.

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With the tremendous advances being made in cancer research, a sustained national agenda is vital if this progress is to continue. Even with the generous support from Congress, the National Cancer Institute is only able to fund approximately one out of every six of all peer-reviewed and approved research project grants. Critical additional funding is urgently needed in order to support basic, clinical and translational research that will lead to the development of new cancer therapies and technologies.

Furthermore, a sustained investment in biomedical research will contribute to the economic health of our nation by producing high-wage jobs, an increased output of goods and services, and it will enable the United States to maintain its dominance in the medical technology industry.

We note that on September 9, 2008, NIH Director Dr. Elias A. Zerhouni testified before the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, **“I have never witnessed in my career such a rapid pace of new and extraordinary discoveries.”** This statement exemplifies the need for a bold recommitment to biomedical research funded through NIH.

We thank you for your careful consideration of this important request to provide \$1.9 billion for the National Institutes of Health in the forthcoming economic stimulus legislation.

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The Society of Gynecologic Oncologists
The V Foundation for Cancer Research