ASCO Applauds Congress for Raising Minimum Age to Purchase Tobacco and Boosting Cancer Research Funding

Statement by ASCO President Howard A. "Skip" Burris III, MD, FACP, FASCO
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"The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) applauds Congress for working across party lines to raise the minimum age for purchasing tobacco products to 21. A longtime advocate on this issue, ASCO believes this important change will delay and reduce the use of tobacco and help prevent tobacco-related cancers. A 2015 report from the Institute of Medicine predicted that raising the minimum age for the sale of tobacco products to 21 would, over time, reduce the smoking rate by about 12 percent and cut smoking-related deaths by 10 percent. We commend Congress for taking this important step and look forward to continuing to work with lawmakers and regulators in service of our longstanding commitment to reducing and eventually eliminating tobacco-related cancers.

"We also commend Congress for continuing its bipartisan commitment to investing in our nation's biomedical research infrastructure. The $41.7 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and $6.44 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) included in the bill passed today by the Senate will spark innovation and propel the next generation of cancer treatment and cures, offering hope to millions of Americans with cancer.

"ASCO looks forward to continuing to work with Congress on legislation that will accelerate the progress we've made by supporting prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer."

About ASCO:

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. (ASCO®) is committed to making a world of difference in cancer care. As the world's leading organization of its kind, ASCO represents nearly 45,000 oncology professionals who care for people living with cancer. Through
research, education, and promotion of the highest-quality patient care, ASCO works to conquer cancer and create a world where cancer is prevented or cured, and every survivor is healthy. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation. Learn more at www.ASCO.org, explore patient education resources at www.Cancer.Net, and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.