



October 7, 2013

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader Pelosi, Leader Reid, and Leader McConnell:

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 together to achieve a resolution on the FY 2014 budget that provides the investments necessary to fully prosecute the fight against cancer. Seeing the many statements from members of both parties in the House and Senate on the government shutdown's impact on patient care at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical Center, and childhood cancer patients in particular, is an important recognition of the harm being caused by the shutdown. However, the damage inflicted by the shutdown has the potential to extend well beyond the NIH Clinical Center.

In addition to the NIH not being able to accept new patients, research in labs at the NIH has also been halted. Researchers conducting basic and translational research were furloughed and forced to abandon their work. The NIH is also unable to review and fund any research grants. Training for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows has also been put on hold.

For as much as cancer patients are relying on the NIH for the development of new and better ways to treat their diseases, they also rely on other agencies and programs directly impacting the fight against cancer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cancer control programs support evidence-based, lifesaving cancer prevention strategies, as well as surveillance and other educational and awareness initiatives in every state. Collectively, the CDC cancer programs are the foundation of our country's cancer prevention efforts. In the near term, CDC staff is

furloughed and unable to provide advice and support for state cancer prevention efforts. If the shutdown is protracted, educational and outreach efforts led by CDC staff would be derailed.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will have to cease safety activities such as routine establishment inspections, some compliance and enforcement activities, monitoring of imported drugs and the majority of the laboratory research necessary to inform public health decision-making.

OVAC members appreciate the challenges Congress has faced over the past few years in balancing budget priorities and reducing our nation's deficit. Unfortunately, support for cancer research and prevention have eroded during this time. This has resulted in fewer cancer research grants being funded by the NIH and fewer people having access to state-based cancer screening and prevention programs. We urge you to work together to achieve a resolution on the FY 2014 budget that provides the investments necessary to fully prosecute the fight against cancer, and stand ready to work with you to support this effort.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Cancer Gene Therapy
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 Commission
on Cancer
American Congress of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists
American Social Health Association
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health
Forum
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of Community Cancer Centers
Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network
Cancer Support Community
Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer
Research
Colon Cancer Alliance
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing
Stomach Cancer
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus

International Myeloma Foundation
LIVESTRONG Foundation
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Malecare Prostate Cancer Support
Men's Health Network
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
The MPN Research Foundation
National Alliance of State Prostate Cancer
Coalitions
National Association of Chronic Disease
Directors
National Brain Tumor Society
National Cervical Cancer Coalition
National Coalition for Cancer Research
(NCCR)
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Pennsylvania Prostate Cancer Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Preventing Colorectal Cancer
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Susan G. Komen Advocacy Alliance
Us TOO International Prostate Cancer
Education and Support Network