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September 10, 2013

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
205 Cannon House Office Building
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doris Matsui
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Leonard Lance
133 Cannon House Office Building
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Rogers
2112 Rayburn House Office Building
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Eshoo, Lance, Matsui, and Rogers:

On behalf of the Cancer Support Community (CSC) and the patients we represent, thank you for introducing The FDA Safety Over Sequestration Act of 2013 (H.R. 2725). We are pleased to express support for this important legislation and commend this important bipartisan effort to prevent the sequestration of future FDA user fees.

The CSC is the largest, professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, with a network of over 50 licensed affiliates, more than 100 satellite locations, and a vibrant online community, touching more than one million people affected by cancer each year.

Sequestration cuts to Medicare, the National Institutes of Health, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have already negatively impacted care received by patients. This is inexcusable. Feeling further financial limitations by the withholding of approximately \$83 million in user fees that are being collected but made unavailable to the agency, the FDA will have difficulty keeping up with increasing scientific complexity of the drugs and devices they evaluate. They will also struggle to properly train and empower its staff when faced with continued sequestration limitations to funds that have been uniquely designated for the purpose of increasing capacity and effectiveness of the FDA. Congress should find a bipartisan solution for releasing the sequestered FY13 user fees as Congress continues its work on the FY14 appropriations process.

It is unacceptable to undermine the FDA's role in patient protection and marketplace integrity. The FDA facilitates timely access to chemotherapy drugs while also approving new and ground-breaking medicines, medical diagnosis and devices following rigorous evaluation. At a time when there are more breakthrough drugs under consideration, the FDA can little afford additional resource restrictions. Congress chose to provide the FDA with exclusive user-fee based funding in order to mitigate historically insufficient funding from federal resources. Congress must continue that promise. The FDA Safety Over Sequestration Act accomplishes this by guaranteeing FDA access to those user fees and that those fees are spent as intended.

The CSC strongly supports your efforts to insure continued access to targeted and necessary funding for the FDA. If you have any questions or would like assistance from CSC on any issue involving the impact of cancer research or drug development upon the patient experience, please do not hesitate to contact Alpha Lillstrom at alpha@cancersupportcommunity.org or 202.650.5365.

Sincerely,

Kim Thiboldeaux
President
Cancer Support Community