

- American Lung Association • Addi's Cure •
 - American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network • American Thoracic Society •
 - Beverly Fund • Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation •
 - Caring Ambassadors Program •
 - Jeni Fund for Women's Lung Cancer Research • Kate MacIntyre Foundation •
 - Lung Cancer Foundation of America • National Lung Cancer Partnership •
 - Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago •
 - Rexanna's Foundation for Fighting Lung Cancer • Upstage Lung Cancer
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April 13, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Shelby:

The undersigned organizations write today to ask for your committee to recognize the importance of funding lung cancer research, treatment, prevention and patient services for fiscal year 2012. Our organizations are very troubled by the cuts to the National Institutes for Health (NIH), as passed by H.R. 1 in the U.S. House of Representatives, and how these cuts will affect NIH's ability to continue its essential research efforts. The devastating impacts of lung cancer require sustained investments in order to reduce incidence and mortality rates.

Lung cancer is the leading cancer killer in the U.S, killing almost 160,000 people every year. Lung cancer has one of the highest incidence rates and one of the lowest survival rates. Smoking is the biggest cause of this disease, but exposure to second-hand smoke, air pollution, radon, asbestos, and other occupational hazards are also factors for this dreaded disease.

Each year, more than 222,000 new cases are diagnosed but tragically, only 15 percent of lung cancers are diagnosed at an early stage – making most diagnoses a death sentence. Advances in cancer prevention and treatment research have increased breast and colorectal cancer survival rates to 89 and 65 percent respectively, whereas lung cancer survival rates remain at a low 16 percent. More must be done to increase lung cancer survivorship.

While our organizations recognize that these are unprecedented economic times, increased national attention to lung cancer is long overdue. There has been success in reducing other forms of cancer by a robust investment in research. We ask for your help in ensuring that funding for lung cancer research is not only restored, but is made a priority in the FY 2012 appropriations. Research for this deadly disease must be expanded so that surviving lung cancer becomes the norm instead of the exception.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this and many other health issues.

Sincerely,

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