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June 6, 2012

Sent to:

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations

Dear Senator/Representative:

The American Lung Association writes today to ask your committee to recognize the importance of funding for lung cancer research, treatment, prevention and patient services in the fiscal year 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

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 can also cause lung cancer. The devastating impacts of lung cancer require sustained investments in order to reduce incidence and mortality rates.

Each year, more than 226,000 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 90 and 64 percent respectively, whereas lung cancer survival rates remain at a low 16 percent. More must be done to increase lung cancer survivorship.

While our organization recognizes 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 made a priority in the FY 2013 appropriations bill. Research for this deadly disease must be expanded so that lung cancer survival becomes the norm instead of the exception.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CD Connor', written in a cursive style.

Charles D. Connor
President and CEO