



April 28, 2025

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member House Appropriations
Committee & Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Capito, Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member Baldwin, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As members of One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC), a broad coalition of over 50 public interest groups representing millions of cancer patients, researchers, providers, survivors, and their families, we urge you to prioritize funding for cancer research and prevention in the Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

As you know, cancer is a relentless disease that impacts millions of Americans. In 2026 alone, the projected number of new cancer diagnoses in the United States will top 2 million (5,590 each day) and will claim the lives of over 618,000 people, which equates to about 1,600 deaths per day. But thanks to your bipartisan, bicameral, and steadfast leadership, the nation has made significant progress in the fight against cancer. More than 18 million American cancer survivors are alive today—the most ever—and cancer mortality rates have fallen for over 30 years.

As we write you today, however, continued progress is under serious threat. Funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI) was frozen in FY25; in real terms, because of inflation, federal support for biomedical research will drop for the first time in a decade. Layoffs and administrative slowdowns at NIH are further limiting progress, at a time when other countries are boosting their research investments. And most concerning of all, a draft Administration budget request for FY26 calls for cutting NIH funding by \$20 billion, or about 40%, and completely eliminating all cancer prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Federal cancer research represents America at its best—saving lives, driving innovation and fueling economic growth across the nation. Congress must reject any proposed cuts to cancer research and prevention and instead resume sustained, robust funding for these efforts. Therefore, we respectfully request your support for the following programmatic funding levels for FY26:

OVAC Requests for NCI, NIH, and the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)

NCI: \$7.93 billion, or \$710 million over the FY25 funding level.

NCI is currently experiencing a demand for research funding that is far beyond that of any other Institutes or Centers. Between FY13 and FY24, the number of unique R01/R37 grant applicants to NCI rose by 48%, compared to 23% at all other Institutes or Centers during that time. Simply put, seven out of every eight grant proposals currently go unfunded. NCI needs predictable and robust funding to be able to support the groundbreaking ideas researchers are proposing and prevent losing a generation of young investigators.

With increased funding, NCI can advance the goals of the National Cancer Plan and accelerate progress in reaching the goals of reducing the death rate from cancer by 50% over the next 25 years by funding hundreds of more research proposals; enrolling more people in clinical trials; and seizing opportunities for progress in key areas of research like unraveling the complexity of cancer metastasis, harnessing the power of cancer data, and improving patients' lives through symptom science research.

NIH: \$51.3 billion, a \$4.2 billion increase over the FY25 funding level. Such an investment is not only required to accelerate progress against cancer but will provide a needed boost toward maintaining a position of global leadership in scientific discovery. Notably, 83% of the NIH's budget is competitively awarded through nearly 60,000 research and training grants to more than 300,000 researchers at over 2,500 universities, medical schools, and research institutions located in every state, Washington, D.C., and U.S. territories. According to a United for Medical Research report, in FY24, NIH-funded research supported nearly 407,782 jobs across the U.S. and generated more than \$94.6 billion in economic activity

ARPA-H: \$1.5 billion, or continued funding at the FY25 level, to advance ARPA-H's unique focus on "high potential, high impact" research and potential for transformative breakthroughs in cancer and other diseases. Importantly, funding for the agency should be in addition to and not at the expense of robust increases for the NCI and other core NIH research programs.

OVAC Requests for the CDC

Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC): \$472.4 million. More than 40% of newly diagnosed cancers in the U.S. are potentially preventable, and the substantial costs of treating advanced disease could be reduced, using evidence-based strategies, many of which are supported by DCPC. About 80% of DCPC funding goes to states to provide resources to communities that promote effective cancer prevention and control practices in addition to life-saving cancer screenings.

OVAC's requests for key programs within the DCPC:

- National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program: **\$32 million**
- National Program of Cancer Registries: **\$63.4 million**
- National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program: **\$265 million overall, \$230 million** not counting WISEWOMAN
- Colorectal Cancer Control Program: **\$51 million**
- National Skin Cancer Prevention Education Program: **\$6 million**
- Prostate Cancer Awareness Campaign: **\$20 million**
- Ovarian Cancer Control Initiative: **\$20 million**
- Gynecologic Cancer and Education and Awareness (Johanna's Law): **\$15 million**
- Cancer Survivorship Resource Center: **\$1.5 million**
- Breast Cancer for Young Woman: **\$9 million**

At a time when cancer researchers are making historic advances in new treatments and therapies, we urge Congress to sustain and increase the pace of discovery through robust enhanced cancer research and prevention funding to ensure that progress against cancer continues.

If you have questions, please contact Julie Nickson, Vice President, Federal Advocacy and Coalitions, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and Chair, One Voice Against Cancer at Julie.Nickson@cancer.org. Once again, thank you for your continued leadership on funding issues important in the fight against cancer.

Sincerely,

OVAC Members (OPT OUT)