

CANCER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

**A PATIENT-CENTERED FORUM OF NATIONAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS
ADDRESSING PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN CANCER**

**FY 2027 Written Testimony for the Hearing Record
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Submitted by the Cancer Leadership Council
To Address the Federal Commitment to Curing Cancer
FY 2027 Appropriations for NIH and CDC**

The undersigned organizations of the Cancer Leadership Council, representing cancer survivors, physicians and other health professionals, researchers, and caregivers and families of those with cancer, urge Congress to continue strong support for cancer research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and cancer prevention and control programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Strong federal support for these cancer efforts is critical to our national commitment to helping Americans live with, through, and beyond cancer and to curing cancer.

We commend the Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee for its strong leadership in the nation's fight against cancer. By supporting appropriations for cancer research, prevention and early detection, and care, you have made a difference in the lives of people with cancer.

We recommend:

- At least \$51.303 billion for the NIH for FY 2027, which would include at least \$7.989 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI).
- At least \$482.9 million for the CDC Division of Cancer Prevention and Control.
 - Comprehensive Cancer Control Initiative, \$32 million
 - Cancer Registries, \$63.4 million
 - National Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (cancer only), \$230 million
 - Colorectal Cancer, \$51 million
 - Skin Cancer, \$6 million
 - Prostate Cancer, \$20 million
 - Ovarian Cancer, \$20 million
 - Johanna's Law, \$15 million
 - Cancer Survivorship, \$1.5 million

- Breast Cancer Awareness for Young Women, \$9 million

Americans with Cancer and our Nation’s Commitment to Them

Approximately 18.6 million Americans are living with a history of invasive cancer. About 2.1 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in the United States in 2026, and more than 626,000 people will die from cancer this year. Each day, about 1,700 Americans die from cancer.¹

Those numbers are staggering, and the Americans behind the numbers have experienced the life-changing moment when they hear the words, “you have cancer.” During most of the 20th century, the age-adjusted cancer rate rose, in large part because of the smoking epidemic. Fortunately, our nation is making progress in the fight against cancer. The cancer death rate has steadily declined from its peak in 1991. The decline in the death rate by 34% between 1991 and 2023 reflects 4.8 million deaths averted.²

The improvements in the cancer death rate are largely because of reductions in smoking, earlier detection of cancer, and improved treatments. Strong investment in cancer research over decades has led to new treatments and longer lives for many with cancer. A strong commitment to screening and early detection of cancer has contributed to the death rate improvements, and smoking cessation programs have had significant public health benefits.

When Congress enacted the National Cancer Act of 1971, it found that “the present state of our understanding of cancer is a consequence of broad advances across the full scope of the biomedical sciences” and that “a great opportunity is offered as a result of recent advances in the knowledge of this dread disease to conduct energetically a national program against cancer.”³ In subsequent decades, Congress has honored the aims and goals of the National Cancer Act by funding NIH to meet scientific opportunities and advance cancer treatments.

A strong and continuing commitment to the war on cancer is necessary, despite the progress we are making. Millions are still diagnosed with cancer annually. Many still die. Those who are treated successfully may need medical care to address the side effects of cancer and cancer treatment. And cancer remains a formidable foe, challenging the best scientists. For example, in recent years, we have seen the diagnosis of certain cancers at a younger age than previously. Colorectal cancer is among those. The research commitment must always meet the complexity of cancer.

¹ American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2026*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, 2026.

² American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2026*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, 2026.

³ Public Law 92-218.

Progress in the Cancer Fight

To understand the importance of the federal commitment to cancer, we review below achievements fueled by public investment and accomplished by public and private sector scientists, academic researchers and biopharmaceutical research and development companies.

Federal funding has supported cancer research efforts that have:

- Deepened our fundamental understanding of cancer;
- Contributed to translational research related to the development of new therapies;
- Fostered the development of new early detection and screening methods;
- Led to a cancer research workforce that is unparalleled across the globe;
- Facilitated public-private partnerships for testing and marketing new treatments;
- Improved our knowledge of how Americans with cancer can live with, through, and beyond cancer; and
- Contributed to the global fight against cancer.

The public-private cancer research and development effort, fueled by NIH intramural researchers and NIH-funded extramural researchers and their private industry partners, has been a critical contributor to the advances in treatment that have improved cancer survival. In a document entitled “Milestones in Cancer Research and Discovery,” NCI has detailed many important cancer advances, including the steady improvement of chemotherapy agents, development of monoclonal antibodies, and development of targeted therapies. Enhanced radiation therapy options have been researched and put into practice. In recent years, the development of immunotherapies has given many cancer patients hope and longer lives.⁴

Unmet Needs of People with Cancer and their Families, Caregivers, and Friends

Despite the impressive progress that has been made in the fight against cancer, there are still significant gaps in care and substantial unmet needs among cancer survivors:

- Even with important treatment advances, many forms of cancer remain resistant to treatment. Research and development are necessary to address

⁴ National Cancer Institute, Milestones in Cancer Research and Discovery, accessed on March 31, 2026, at <https://www.cancer.gov/research/progress/250-years-milestones>.

these forms of cancer and ensure that those diagnosed with these cancers can survive and thrive.

- The number of cancer diagnoses will exceed 2.1 million annually in 2026, creating even greater demand for treatment and treatment advances, supportive care improvements, and enhanced survivorship interventions.
- In one decade, the number of cancer survivors in the United States will be 22 million. Needs for long-term survivorship care will only deepen. Children diagnosed with cancer may suffer significant treatment side effects, and research is necessary to address the needs of childhood cancer survivors.

In addition to boosting NIH funding overall and funding to NCI, the CDC Division of Cancer Control and Prevention must be sustained and strengthened.

Sustain the Federal Commitment to Curing Cancer

NIH research funding fuels the advances noted above and supports the broader economy, including through job creation and new economic activity. As a result of robust federal commitment to biomedical research, the United States is the global leader in medical research and the leader in developing new, life-saving cancer therapies. All these effects are important and should be considered in making NIH funding decisions. The most important reason to continue strong support for NIH and NCI and CDC cancer programs is because these federal efforts save lives.

Respectfully submitted by the

Cancer Leadership Council

Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+)
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Association for Clinical Oncology
Association of Oncology Social Work
CancerCare
Cancer Nation
Children's Cancer Cause
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association
International Myeloma Foundation
LUNgevity Foundation
Lymphoma Research Foundation