

August 3, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related
Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related
Agencies
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Cc: Secretary Thomas Price, M.D.
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear House and Senate Appropriations Leaders:

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice-Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related
Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and Related
Agencies
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of patients, caregivers, researchers, physician-scientists, and advocates, thank you for your unwavering support for the conquest of cancer through robust, sustained and predictable increases for medical research through the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and a well-funded Food and Drug Administration (FDA) . Specifically, your support for the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot Initiative, authorized by the 21st Century Cures Act and funded through your Committees, is deeply appreciated at this time of extraordinary promise in cancer research and cancer therapeutic development.

The FDA Oncology Center of Excellence (OCE) was established in January 2017 as a key component of the Cancer Moonshot Initiative, and it is an indispensable partner to the NCI, which is focused on accelerating clinical and translational research in key areas identified by the Moonshot's Blue Ribbon Panel. As the NCI and the FDA work in partnership to implement key elements of the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot Initiative, we respectfully request that you ensure these agencies have the legislative authority required to fully collaborate when and how appropriate. Specifically, providing transfer authority between the NCI and the FDA for Moonshot Initiative efforts will ensure the FDA OCE can fulfill its vital mission of translating the science to accelerate the delivery of safe and effective therapies to cancer patients.

Authorized by the 21st Century Cures Act, which was supported by an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress, the FDA OCE represents a transformative opportunity to accelerate the pace at which groundbreaking cancer discoveries are translated into new therapies for the patients who need them. The OCE has the potential to expand the existing framework for an integrative approach to oncology product development, ensure consistent review times and incorporate the patient perspective into regulatory decision making, all while ensuring that safe and effective products reach patients faster. Because of the OCE, oncology holds the distinction of being the first disease area to have a coordinated, clinical review of drugs, biologics and devices across the FDA's three medical product centers.

Because an estimated 1.7 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer in 2017, and nearly 600,000 Americans will succumb to the disease this year, funding for this vital center should not be delayed. A fully funded OCE will ensure that the FDA is efficiently and effectively adapting to rapidly emerging advancements in science that are taking place thanks to the NIH and the NCI. Perhaps more important, the OCE will bring hope to cancer patients and their loved ones by accelerating the delivery of therapies that will save and improve lives.

We look forward to working with you to ensure the NCI and the OCE have the authority required to fulfill their mission of implementing an integrated approach to oncology, from pursuing the cutting edge research to expediting the review and approval of complex and combination products. Without a strong partnership, we risk slowing the pace of scientific progress and therapeutic development that benefits cancer patients.

Sincerely,

Accelerate Brain Cancer Cure (ABC²)
AliveAndKickn
Along Comes Hope
American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
Association of American Cancer Institutes
CancerCare
Cancer Support Community
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation
FasterCures
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Kids v Cancer
The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS)
Lung Cancer Alliance
LUNgevity
Melanoma Research Alliance
Michael's Mission
National Brain Tumor Society
National Coalition for Cancer Research
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Oncology Nursing Society
Prevent Cancer Foundation
The Raymond Foundation
Research!America
Susan G. Komen