



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

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April 6, 2000

The Honorable Bill Archer  
Chairman, Ways & Means Committee  
1236 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Last week people across the Nation came to a better understanding of the great progress that is being made against cancer through basic science discoveries and the translation of those discoveries into life-extending therapies in clinical trials. The HBO informational documentary entitled "Cancer: Evolution to Revolution" makes clear the central role of cancer clinical trials in efforts to prevent, diagnose and treat this terrible disease that will strike one of every two American men and one of every three American women.

The undersigned members of the Cancer Leadership Council (CLC) advocate on behalf of people with cancer, their caregivers and not-for-profit organizations that fund cancer research. Coverage of cancer clinical trials is among our highest policy priorities. Access to appropriate clinical trials should be regarded as a fundamental patient right for people with cancer, and the Patients' Bill of Rights would be incomplete without it. We appreciate the willingness of the Conferees to consider this very important provision.

We also urge you to extend coverage not only to trials sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other government funding organizations, but to high quality trials approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as well. Success against cancer is not just a public sector endeavor. Many of the most significant advances are the product of privately sponsored research, and industrial trials are most likely to include the innovative new agents most sought by cancer patients. There can be no question that the rigor and thoroughness of the review of these trials by FDA ensures their quality. People with cancer should have access to these important studies as well as those sponsored by NIH and other government entities.

Comprehensive coverage of routine patient care costs for people enrolled in cancer clinical trials, whether in the public or the private sector, is an investment in the health of the Nation. More than 8 million cancer survivors thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

## **Cancer Leadership Council**

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support, and Education  
American Cancer Society  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Cancer Care, Inc.  
Cancer Research Foundation of America  
The Children's Cause, Inc.  
Colorectal Cancer Network  
Cure For Lymphoma Foundation  
Coalition of National Cancer Cooperative Groups, Inc.  
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Prostate Cancer Coalition  
North American Brain Tumor Coalition  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance  
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network  
The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation  
US-TOO International, Inc.  
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization