



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

June 12, 2001

Dear Senator _____:

We are writing to bring to your attention recently introduced legislation that deserves your support and that of all your colleagues in the Senate. The Access to Cancer Therapies Act (S. 913) would extend Medicare coverage to all oral anti-cancer drugs. This timely and important legislation was introduced last month by Senators Snowe, Rockefeller, Feinstein and Gordon Smith (see attached letter of appreciation), and we urge you to sign on immediately as a co-sponsor if you have not already done so.

While each of our organizations recognizes the need for comprehensive drug coverage for seniors, there is a pressing need for beneficiaries with cancer as targeted new drugs are being approved that are available only in oral form and thus not currently covered by Medicare. Recent news reports in both the scientific and the popular press have highlighted new oral drugs that are more effective and less toxic than current treatments. Seniors deserve access to these new drugs without delay, and existing hormonal agents for breast and prostate cancer also are long overdue for coverage. These products demonstrably extend the lives of cancer patients, and Medicare coverage for cancer care will be incomplete if they are excluded.

If you are willing to lend your name and support to this essential legislation, please contact the offices of either Senator Snowe or Senator Rockefeller. Your action will be much appreciated by the entire cancer community.

The Cancer Leadership Council

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support, and Education
American Cancer Society
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology & Oncology, Inc.
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Cancer Care, Inc.
Cancer Research Foundation of America
The Children's Cause, Inc.
Coalition of National Cancer Cooperative Groups, Inc.
Colorectal Cancer Network
Cure For Lymphoma Foundation
International Myeloma Foundation
Kidney Cancer Association

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
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
US TOO! International, Inc.
The Wellness Community
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization