



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

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May 8, 2002

Dear Senator:

The Cancer Leadership Council, representing cancer patient, provider and research organizations, would like to express appreciation for your leadership in addressing the controversy over screening mammography following the recent publication of an article in Lancet that raised questions in some minds about the effectiveness of the technology. Your willingness to schedule a joint Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee hearing on February 28, 2002, and provide a forum for airing the issues was an important step in reassuring women concerning the validity of current recommendations for screening by public health officials.

Screening techniques like mammography are only effective to the extent that the target population maintains a sense of confidence in their contribution to the public health. Questions of the sort raised in Lancet can undermine that confidence and result in failure to adhere to important recommendations. In light of this, your prompt scheduling of a hearing and your aggressive search for reliable follow-up information were essential.

As additional data from the many studies of screening mammography continue to be reviewed and analyzed, we understand that women will want to have timely responses from recommending bodies in the government and otherwise. We trust that the Committee will remain involved in this important issue and schedule additional hearings as appropriate when further information becomes available.

#### Cancer Leadership Council

Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support, and Education  
American Cancer Society  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology, Inc.  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Cancer Care, Inc.  
Cancer Research Foundation of America  
Colorectal Cancer Network  
Kidney Cancer Association

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
National Alliance of Breast Cancer Organizations  
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship  
National Patient Advocate Foundation  
National Prostate Cancer Coalition  
North American Brain Tumor Coalition  
Oncology Nursing Society  
The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation  
US TOO! International, Inc.  
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization