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Whitehouse, Eshoo, Lance Applaud Development of Pancreatic Cancer Research Framework

Requirement Set Forth in Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act of 2012

Washington, D.C. – On Friday the National Cancer Institute announced a scientific framework for advancing research on pancreatic cancer, as directed under the Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act of 2012. Today, U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and U.S. Representatives Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA) and Leonard Lance (R-NJ) – the authors of that legislation – are joining Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Chairman Tom Harkin in welcoming the framework.

“Too many lives have been cut short by pancreatic cancer, which remains difficult both to detect and to treat,” said Whitehouse. “This step forward will give new hope to those facing this terrible disease. I am grateful to the tireless cancer awareness advocates whose steadfastness helped turn this idea into law.”

“For too many Americans, recalcitrant cancers are a death sentence, which is why I worked for six years with Senator Whitehouse and Rep. Lance to enact a meaningful law that can reverse this trend,” said Eshoo. “I commend the National Cancer Institute for releasing the scientific framework on pancreatic cancer. It’s an important step toward the day when there are more recalcitrant cancer survivors than there are victims.”

“Today’s announcement by the National Cancer Institute is another show of progress in combating this terrible disease,” said Lance. “This framework will lay the groundwork for improved treatment methods and greater coordination in our research efforts. We owe this progress to the advocates. Their passion is often driven by the care of loved ones and their personal stories are profiles in courage.”

“Each year, tens of thousands of Americans are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and those numbers have steadily increased for more than a decade. One of the best ways we can fight this terrible disease is through strong investments in medical research,” Harkin said. “The announcement by the National Cancer Institute highlights both the progress that has been made in understanding this deadly cancer and the promise of ongoing research. I look forward to learning more about this critical progress as NIH continues to support this vital research.”

“We applaud the National Cancer Institute and Dr. Varmus for releasing this crucial report. It provides specific recommendations that when fully implemented will advance national efforts to

improve pancreatic cancer patient outcomes,” stated Julie Fleshman, president and CEO for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. “We look forward to working with the NCI, our colleagues in the pancreatic cancer community and Congress to implement the recommendations and ensure that the final action plan includes all of the provisions of the statute.”

The Recalcitrant Cancer Research Act directs the National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, to work with federal and non-federal representatives to develop scientific frameworks for assessing and advancing research on cancers with five-year survival rates below 50 percent. These frameworks will help to identify scientific advancements, evaluate the sufficiency of researchers, and outline a plan for ongoing research. Advancements in the diagnosis and treatment of so-called recalcitrant cancers, such as cancer of the pancreas, lung, liver, or ovaries, have lagged behind the overall gains made in fighting the disease in recent years.

The National Cancer Institute’s framework is available [here](#).

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