



March 7, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Labor, HHS Education and
Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Labor, HHS, Education and
Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, I am writing to strongly urge you and your colleagues to put the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on a path of sustained growth by appropriating \$34.5 billion for the agency, including \$5.9 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI), as well as allocating a portion of any Cancer Moonshot funding to research on recalcitrant cancers, which have a five-year survival rate below 50 percent.

While we appreciate your leadership last year in securing added funding for NIH, additional funding is needed to make up for a decade of decreases and flat-funding that only served to slow progress towards better ways to prevent, detect and treat cancer.

There is perhaps no better example of the difficult challenges to be addressed than pancreatic cancer. This year, pancreatic cancer surpassed breast cancer to become the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths. While survival rates for many other cancers have steadily improved, the pancreatic cancer survival rate remains in the single digits, at only *eight percent*. It is projected that in 2016, more than 53,000 Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and nearly 42,000 will die from this disease. Even more troubling than these grim statistics are projections that pancreatic cancer is on pace to surpass colorectal cancer to become the *second* leading cause of cancer-related death within the next four years.

On behalf of the patients diagnosed with our nation's deadliest cancers, we respectfully request that you make cancer research and the NCI a top national priority in this year's Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, and that a portion of any funds provided for a Cancer Moonshot initiative be allocated to research on recalcitrant cancers, which have a five-year survival rate below 50 percent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Megan Gordon Don". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Megan Gordon Don
Vice President, Government Affairs & Advocacy

cc: U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on L-HHS



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