



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
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March 17, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

On behalf of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), thank you so much for your leadership in the fight against cancer. As the advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, ACS CAN advocates on behalf of the millions of cancer patients, survivors and their families throughout the nation who see cancer research and prevention as a critical national priority.

We are mindful that the President faced many difficult decisions in formulating his FY11 budget. While we believe a very substantial increase is necessary to sustain the earlier investment in biomedical research contained in the Recovery Act, we are grateful, considering the current budget climate, that the budget included a \$1 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute.

We are deeply concerned, however, about the funding levels proposed for the critical cancer control programs administered by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In particular, the President's budget proposed only \$210 million for the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), a \$4 million cut, which would lead to 7,000 fewer low-income and uninsured women having access to breast cancer screening and treatment next year.

In addition, the CDC Congressional Justification requested directive language giving states the authority to move resources across chronic disease programs, thus permitting the diversion of already-scarce federal NBCCEDP funds away from life-saving cancer screenings. We are strongly opposed to this proposal and are deeply concerned about the risk it poses to women.

NBCCEDP is unquestionably one of the most effective and life-saving cancer control programs supported by the CDC. In its current state, it is funded well below the FY10 authorized level of \$250 million, and it serves less than one in five eligible women. In FY08, the last year for which such data is available, it served 79,000 fewer women than in FY 2005, and the situation has only become worse with static federal funding and cuts in state programs.

It is a fact that sixty percent of cancer deaths today could be prevented through better prevention and early detection and access to health care. CDC cancer prevention programs, like NBCCEDP, provide vital resources to every state for cancer monitoring and surveillance, screening programs, tobacco cessation, state cancer control planning and implementation, and awareness initiatives targeting skin, prostate, colon, ovarian, and blood cancers.

We urge you to work toward providing the fully authorized level of \$255 million in FY11, with no allowance for state diversion of the funding to other purposes.

ACS CAN staff and volunteers are prepared to engage Congress on these concerns and we welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff in support of low income, uninsured women who need access to preventive, life-saving cancer screening. If you, or your staff, would like any additional information about this issue, please do not hesitate to contact David Pugach, Associate Director, Federal Relations at david.pugach@cancer.org or 202-585-3219.

Again, thank you so much for your support and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Molly Daniels". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Molly Daniels
Interim President