



92 Senators Support NCI Goal to Eliminate Cancer by 2015
-- Cancer number one killer of Americans under 85 --
September 28, 2005

Washington, DC – Led by U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), co-chairs of the Senate Cancer Coalition, 92 Senators today sent a letter to President Bush expressing their support for the National Cancer Institute’s goal of eliminating cancer death and suffering in ten years, by 2015.

“The most immediate step Congress can take to help achieve the goal of eliminating cancer in 10 years is to maintain \$29.4 billion in funding for the National Institutes of Health in the next fiscal year that is pending in the Senate,” Senator Feinstein said. “This increase of \$1 billion over the previous year for NIH will advance promising research into cancer treatments and cures. I encourage my colleagues in both chambers of Congress to make sure this vital funding is provided to NIH.”

“Cancer research has made great strides, and we can continue this progress by supporting the National Institute of Health’s goal of eliminating cancer death and suffering by 2015,” said Senator Brownback. “By continuing to prioritize investments in cancer research and programs and increasing patient access to life-saving treatments, the vital goal of eliminating cancer in ten years is within reach.”

Following is the text of the letter that the 92 Senators sent to President Bush:

“We are writing to express our commitment to and support for the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) goal of eliminating cancer death and suffering by the year 2015. Thanks to prior investments in cancer research and programs, we are making remarkable progress in the fight against cancer. Achieving the 2015 goal, which was established under your leadership, is now within our reach.

When Congress and President Nixon declared war against cancer in 1971, cancer was largely a death sentence. Three decades later, our national research investment has reaped remarkable returns. Today, early detection can defeat some of the common cancers, such as cancer of the cervix, breast, colon and prostate, which represent nearly half of all cancers. And, childhood cancer is curable in three out of four patients, despite the sad fact that solid tumors claim a great number of our children.

The development of colon cancer screening tests and treatments has led to a 90 percent five-year survival rate for colon cancers caught in the earliest, localized stage and 67 percent when the cancer has spread only to adjacent organs or lymph nodes. Once the cancer has spread to other parts of the body, the five-year survival rate drops to just ten percent. NCI research has also led to the development of molecularly-targeted drugs that attack only cancer cells while

leaving healthy tissue unharmed. These are only two examples of the remarkable advances made through our national investment in cancer research.

Unfortunately, despite this progress, our fight is far from over. Cancer has now surpassed heart disease as the number one killer of Americans under age 85. Cancer strikes one out of every two men and one out of every three women. Two classrooms of children are diagnosed with cancer each day. And this year alone, cancer will claim the lives of more than 560,000 Americans. Eliminating death and suffering from cancer by the year 2015 will require a commitment by Congress to continue to make the fight against cancer a national priority.

We strongly support the Administration's 2015 goal and stand ready to work with the Administration and our colleagues in Congress to make it a reality for the millions of Americans affected by this devastating disease."

In addition to Senators Feinstein and Brownback, the following Senators co-signed this letter: Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), George Allen (R-Va.), Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Evan Bayh (D-Ind.), Bob Bennett (R-Utah), Joe Biden (D-Del.), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), Kit Bond (R-Mo.), Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Jim Bunning (R-Ky.), Conrad Burns (R-Mont.), Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Tom Carper (D-Del.), Lincoln Chafee (R-R.I.), Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), Susan Collins (R-Maine), Kent Conrad (D-N.D.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Jon Corzine (D-N.J.), Larry Craig (R-Idaho), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Mark Dayton (D-Minn.), Jim DeMint (R-S.C.), Mike DeWine (R-Ohio), Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), Elizabeth Dole (R-N.C.), Pete Domenici (R-N.M.), Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), John Ensign (R-Nev.), Russ Feingold (D-Wis.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas), James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), Johnny Isakson (R-Ga.), Jim Jeffords (I-Vt.), Tim Johnson (D-S.D.), Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.), John Kerry (D-Mass.), Herb Kohl (D-Wis.), Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), Mary Landrieu (D-La.), Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.), Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.), Trent Lott (R-Miss.), Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), Mel Martinez (R-Fla.), John McCain (R-Ariz.), Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Ben Nelson (D-Neb.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Barack Obama (D-Ill.), Mark Pryor (D-Ark.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), John Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), Rick Santorum (R-Penn.), Paul Sarbanes (D-Md.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), Gordon Smith (R-Ore.), Olympia Snowe (R-Maine), Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), Jim Talent (R-Mo.), Craig Thomas (R-Wy.), John Thune (R-S.D.), David Vitter (R-La.), George Voinovich (R-Ohio), John Warner (R-Va.), and Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).

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