

2026 New Jersey Legislative Priorities

Victory in the fight against cancer requires bold new public policies that promote cancer prevention, early detection of cancer, and expand access to quality, affordable health care. Lawmakers make many decisions that impact the lives of New Jersey residents impacted by cancer and their leadership is vital to defeating this disease. In 2026, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) will work with the New Jersey Legislature on legislative and regulatory efforts that protect cancer research funding, ensure adequate appropriations funding for lifesaving cancer screening programs, and enact prevention policies that help people who use tobacco products quit and deter kids from ever using tobacco products. We will be making the following fact-based policies a priority and ask for your support:

Investing in Cancer Research

- **New Jersey State Commission on Cancer Research (NJCCR):** For more than 30 years, NJCCR has funded promising cancer research in New Jersey. NJCCR promotes significant and original research in New Jersey into causes, prevention, treatment, and palliation of cancer and serves as a resource to providers and consumers of cancer services. ACS CAN will advocate that New Jersey increase the \$4 million appropriation in funding to \$10 million for the NJCCR, also making it a dedicated non-lapsing fund in Fiscal Year 2026-27.

Reducing the Toll of Tobacco

- **Permanently Close the Casino Loophole in the New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act:** New Jersey's casinos remain the only places exempted from New Jersey's Smoke-Free Air Act. This puts the health of the 22,000 employees at New Jersey's casinos at risk in addition to the casino patrons. By a 2-to-1 margin New Jersey voters support prohibiting indoor smoking in NJ casinos and 7-in-10 New Jersey voters would prefer to visit a smoke-free casino. ACS CAN will advocate for the passage of legislation that will permanently close the loophole and make casinos smoke-free.
- **Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Funding:** ACS CAN will work to increase funding for fact-based, statewide tobacco prevention and cessation programs. ACS CAN will seek to dedicate 3% of the cigarette tax revenue to tobacco control and prevention to increase the resources available to reduce tobacco use in New Jersey.

Ensuring Access to Quality Care

- **Medication Access:** ACS CAN will advocate for legislation that ensures prior authorization and step therapy requirements for prescription drugs are clear, efficient, and patient-friendly while also allowing for exceptions when appropriate.
- **Affordable, Adequate Health Insurance:** ACS CAN will advocate for policies that ensure access to quality, affordable and comprehensive health insurance, including Medicaid, and will support efforts to curb the availability of inadequate health plans.
- **Reducing the Impact of Medical Debt:** ACS CAN recognizes the impact of medical debt on people with cancer, caregivers, and their families. In addition to supporting policies that ensure affordable access to comprehensive healthcare coverage, ACS CAN will advocate for policies that prevent the occurrence of medical debt and reduce the impact of medical debt on individuals and families.

Cancer Prevention and Early Detection

- **Access to Cancer Screenings:** ACS CAN will advocate to maintain funding of \$5 million for the NJCEED Program, the state's cancer screening program for low-income uninsured and underinsured women administered by the New Jersey Department of Health.
- **Prostate Cancer Screening:** ACS CAN will advocate for state regulated insurance plans, including Medicaid, to provide a comprehensive benefit for evidence-based prostate cancer screenings, without cost sharing.

For more information, contact: Quinton Law, New Jersey Government Relations Director ACS CAN at Quinton.Law@cancer.org

ACS CAN is making cancer a top priority for public officials and candidates at the federal, state, and local levels. ACS CAN empowers advocates across the country to make their voices heard and influence evidence-based public policy change as well as legislative and regulatory solutions that will reduce the cancer burden. As the American Cancer Society's nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate, ACS CAN is critical to the fight for a world without cancer. For more information, please visit www.fightcancer.org.

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