



ACS CAN Tennessee Cancer Action Day 2026

Pre - event Training

January 29, 2026

What we'll cover today

- 1 **Where, When, Why**
- 2 **Legislative Overview**
- 3 **Biomarker Testing Deep Dive**
- 4 **Lawmaker Meetings**
- 5 **Post-Event & Media**



Where, When, Why



Why we advocate



Vision: End cancer as we know it, for everyone.

Mission: Improve the lives of people with cancer and their families through advocacy, research, and patient support, to ensure everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer.

Patient
Support



Action
through
advocacy



Advancing
discovery



#TNCAD26

What we advocate for

Access to Care



Accelerating Cures



Prevention, including
Tobacco Control

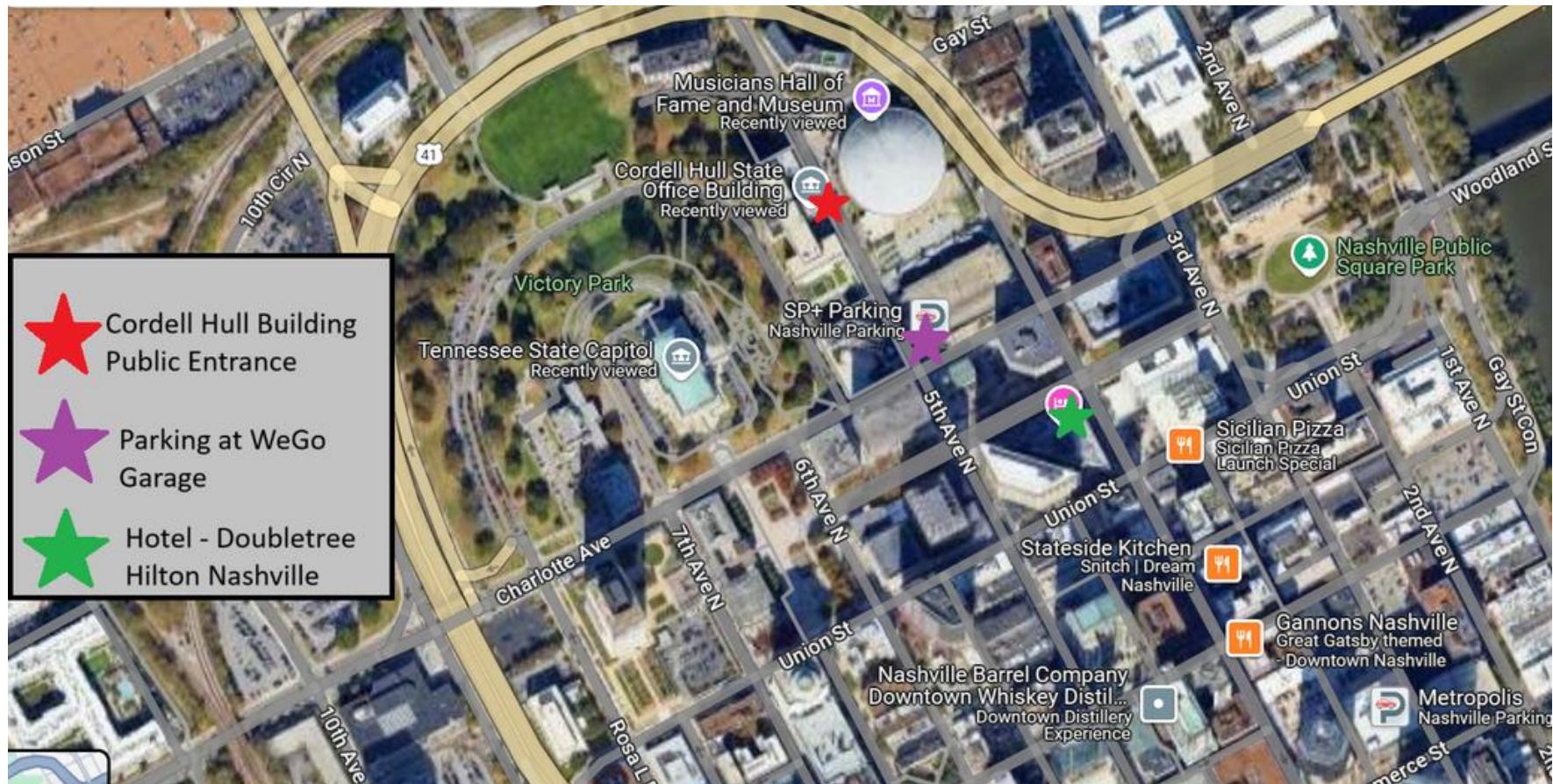


Eliminating Disparities + Building Health Equity



#TNCAD26

Where: Cordell Hull Building



#TNCAD26

When: Time of Events

8:00 a.m. Arrival and Sign-in

8:15 a.m. Breakfast and Overview

9:00 a.m. Legislative Meetings

9:30 a.m. Press Conference on SB435/HB484

11:00 a.m. Transition to room 8D

12:00 p.m. Lunch

12:30 p.m. Group Photo

2:00 p.m. Departure

Note: Legislative meetings will be scheduled throughout this timeline. Each group will follow their individual schedule for meetings.

#TNCAD26



What to wear!





Scope of our advocacy

Recent Tennessee wins

2022

**Repealed
smokefree
preemption
at the state
level**

2023

**Nashville
banned
smoking at age
restricted
venues**

2023

**Increase in
tobacco
control and
cessation
funding**

2024

**PSA for HIM
became law
increasing
access to
prostate
screening**



State Legislative Priorities

Tennessee 2026 Legislative Asks

- 1 Biomarker Testing**
Please support HB484/SB435 to increase access to biomarker testing.
- 2 Tobacco Control/Prevention Funds**
Maintain funding at \$7.1 million for the state's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program.
- 3 Breast and Cervical Screening Program Funds**
Additional \$4 million for the state's Breast and Cervical Screening Program.

#TNCAD26

Issue Overview: Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Funds

- Tobacco prevention and cessation is one of the smartest and most fiscally responsible investments that Tennessee can make, as smoking now directly causes \$3.10 billion in health care costs annually in our state.
- It is especially important since Tennessee has the 3rd highest adult smoking rate in the country and ranks 3rd in smoking-attributable cancer deaths.
- Sustained funding is imperative this year, with the future of \$1.7 million in federal funds being uncertain with the uncertain future of the national Office of Smoking and Health.
- Over 21% of Tennessee high school students use e-cigarettes, compared to 7.8% nationally.

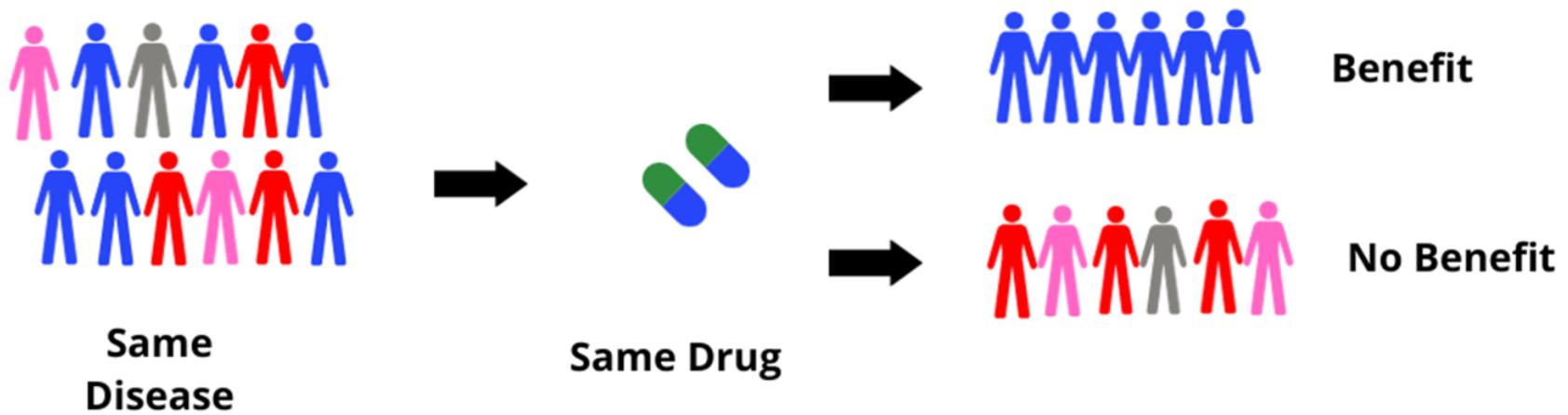
Issue Overview: Breast and Cervical Screening Funds

- The Tennessee Breast and Cervical Screening Program (TBCSP) helps low-income, uninsured and underinsured women gain access to timely breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services. These include mammograms, Pap tests, and HPV tests.
- The increase in funding is imperative as healthcare costs continue to rise and more Tennesseans are predicted to become underinsured and uninsured.
- The program has over 400 vendors across the state, but demand remains high and many Tennesseans go unserved.
- Cancers found at an early stage are easier to treat, cost less, and lead to greater survival.

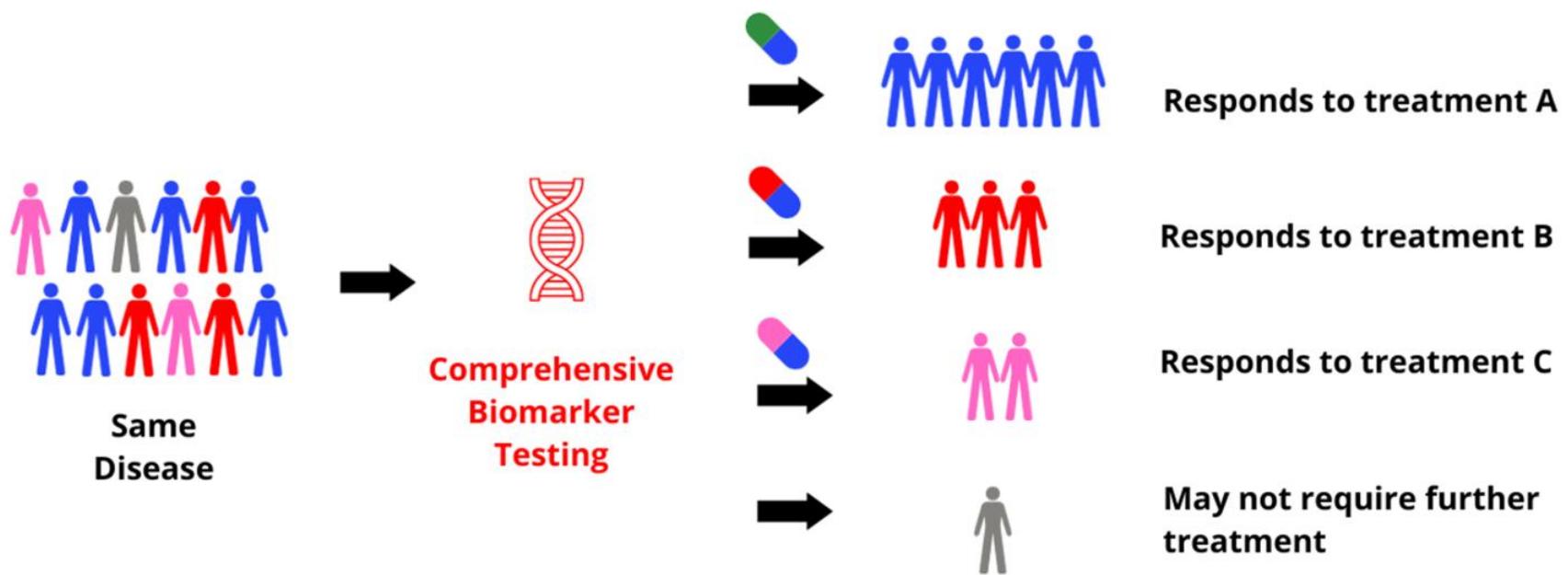


Biomarker Testing

Conventional Approach – Trial and Error



Precision Medicine with Biomarker-Informed Treatment Selection



#TNCAD26

Barriers: Insurance

Coverage of tests differs greatly across payers

- Coverage policies generally more common for single-gene tests vs. multi-gene panel tests

Plans aren't necessarily following the evidence

- A recent paper in *Personalized Medicine* highlights gaps between insurance coverage and clinical practice guidelines.
- Although 91% of plans evaluated reference NCCN treatment guidelines in their biomarker testing policies, **30% under the largest insurer in Tennessee are “more restrictive” than these guidelines for biomarker testing in breast, non-small cell lung cancer, melanoma and/or prostate cancer patients.**

Wong, W., et al. (2022) *Alignment of health plan coverage policies for somatic multigene panel testing with clinical guidelines in select solid tumors.*

Legislation to Address Coverage Gaps

Requires state-regulated insurance plans including TennCare Medicaid to cover comprehensive biomarker testing when supported by medical and scientific evidence

Biomarker testing must be covered for the purposes of diagnosis, treatment, appropriate management, or ongoing monitoring of an enrollee's disease or condition when the test is supported by medical and scientific evidence, including, but not limited to:

1. Labeled indications for an FDA-approved or -cleared test
2. Indicated tests for an FDA-approved drug;
3. Warnings and precautions on FDA-approved drug labels
4. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National Coverage Determinations and Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) Local Coverage Determinations; or
5. Nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines and consensus statements.

Disease and stage agnostic, establishes prior authorization timelines

How will increasing coverage of appropriate biomarker testing help?

- Biomarker testing helps connect patients with the most effective treatment for their cancer and avoid treatments that will be ineffective.

Currently, most plans cover some biomarker testing for some patients.

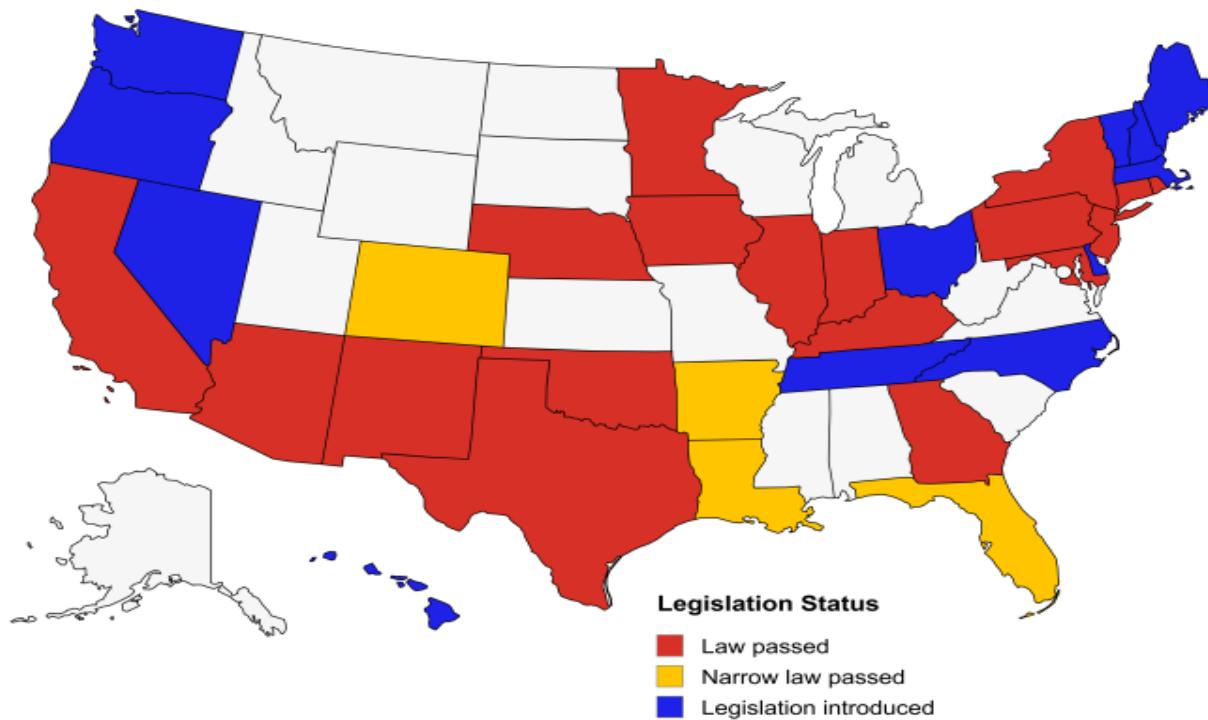
Without action to improve access to biomarker testing, some patients will be left behind from the latest advancements in treatment.

- Personalized treatments are helping cancer patients live longer and better.

- Legislation applies to state-regulated insurance plans, including Medicaid
- Disease & stage agnostic

Biomarker testing should be covered and reimbursed by public and private payers when supported by clinical practice guidelines or peer-reviewed scientific evidence.

Legislation to Expand Access to Biomarker Testing



Legislation enacted: AZ, AR*, CA, CO*, CT**, FL**, GA, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA*, MD, MN, NM, NY, OK, PA, RI, TX

Created with mapchart.net

2025 legislation introduced: CT*, DE, HI, MA, ME, NE, NV, NH, NC, OH, OR, TN, VT, WA

* Private plans only **Public plans only

Updated June 2025



#TNCAD26

Broad Patient & Provider Support for Biomarker Testing



#TNCAD26



Lawmaker Meetings

Hook, Line, Sinker

Hook

Who You Are

Line

What Is Your
Story

Sinker

The Ask

Thank You

Appreciation

Hook

Introductions

Meeting leader introduces the group - the leader in each meeting should be a constituent!

Who you are, where you're from (be specific!)

Who else is in your group

#TNCAD26

Line

Craft your story:

- You know your passion
- You know your cancer connection
- You know the ASK
- You have your talking points

Tell your personal story:

- Connect your story to the importance of the ASKS
- Explain the need: why this is needed/impact on state/why important for cancer etc.)

#TNCAD26

Sinker

Make the ASKs

Secure a response from the lawmaker

#TNCAD26

Hook, Line, Sinker

Hook

Meeting leader introduces the group (name + where you live) and why you are here.

I am here as a volunteer for ACS CAN. We are meeting with nearly every Member of the Tennessee Legislature.

Line

Explain the need: (INSERT why this is needed/impact on state/why important for cancer etc.)

Tell your personal story: Connect your personal story to the importance of the ask/issue.

Sinker

Make the ask!

Will you support (insert ask)?

#TNCAD26



After Your Legislative Meeting

- Lawmaker meeting report back form
- Send a thank you note
- Letter to the Editor
- Post your experiences on social media

Report Back



Report back and let us know how your meeting went

Your feed back helps our staff provide additional information to lawmakers and make strategic decisions in successful campaigns.

Remember: One report back form should be completed for each lawmaker meeting



Scan the QR code or visit:
www.fightcancer.org/reportback



Media

Let's Takeover Social Media



- **X: ACSCANTennessee**
- **Facebook: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Tennessee – ACS CAN**
- **Instagram: ACS CAN TN**
- **Tag your lawmaker**
- **#TNCAD26**
- **#BiomarkersTN**
- **Share your experience & the Ask**
- **Don't forget to engage with others**

#TNCAD26



Take Over Social Media!

- X(Twitter): @ACSCANTennessee
- Facebook: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Tennessee – ACS CAN
- Tag your lawmaker
- #TNCAD26
- #BiomarkersTN
- Experiences & the Ask



Lisa Lacasse @LLacasseACSCAN · Sep 14, 2022
Look at all that IMPACT happening! @ACSCAN #CancerLobbyDay

 Kymm Martinez @KymmMartinez · Sep 13, 2022
Visited @SenAmyKlobuchar in Washington today to advocate for initiatives to help end cancer as we know it, for everyone.
#CancerLobbyDay



Stacey M. (she/her) @staceym_va · Jan 4
Volunteer with me and the Virginia @ACSCAN team on 1/17/23
#cancerlobbyday in Richmond, VA. We will meet with our Virginia
lawmakers to discuss how we can all work together in the fight against
cancer! sign up: act.fightcancer.org/a/va-22-cad





Media Advocacy

Using media to advance public policy,
complementary to grassroots and lobbying
work.

- Letter to the Editor (LTE)
- Social Media (x/Instagram/Facebook)
 - Ask to take a photo with your lawmaker
 - Text photos to Nicole: 561.866.7106



Letter to the Editor (LTE)

- Stacy Jacobson (Senior Regional Advocacy Media Manager) will help you!
- Mention your lawmaker by name & include affiliation as an ACS CAN volunteer
- Your personal cancer connection or connection to the issue



Q&A



Thank You