

Protecting Cancer Cures

Volunteer Toolkit

August Recess



#ProtectCancerCures



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Protecting Cancer Cures



As Members of Congress return to the district for the annual August Recess, it will be critical that ACS CAN volunteers dial up the pressure. Proposed cuts to cancer research and prevention programs will have consequences. Cancer patients can't wait for clinical trials or advances in drug development. Delays in innovation across the cancer continuum — from screening and early detection to treatment and cures — will cost lives.

This toolkit will assist volunteers in activating and mobilizing around ACS CAN's effort to protect cancer cures during the August Recess period. Our goal is to protect cancer research at NIH and NCI and prevention programs at the CDC by securing the highest possible funding as part of the FY26 appropriations process, and volunteer voices will be key to our success.

Volunteer leaders are encouraged to work with their staff partners to share this toolkit with fellow volunteers and get the word out that ACS CAN is calling on Congress to stand in support of the NIH, NCI, and CDC and reject actions that undermine cancer research and prevention efforts.

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During the August Recess, teams are encouraged to take the following actions:



Attend Congressional town halls, either in person or virtually. Utilize the questions provided to ask your Members where they stand on protecting cancer cures.



Get out to community events. Utilize the petition and talking points to encourage members of your community to join our efforts.



Share on social media. Make sure you are sharing the importance of this campaign on your social media platform of choice over the recess period.




Protecting Cancer Cures


Town Hall Questions




It is important to participate in Congressional town halls, either in person or virtually, to ask members publicly about our campaign priorities. Feel free to choose the question best suited to your story or relationship with your member:




Cuts have consequences. Cuts to funding for cancer research and prevention programs mean fewer clinical trials, fewer grants to discover new treatment options, and less access to lifesaving early detection services. *What will you do to ensure that proposed cuts by the Administration to vital cancer research and prevention programs are rejected when Congress begins negotiating Fiscal Year 2026 funding?*




Cancer patients and their families depend on lifesaving cancer research. Every new breakthrough in cancer treatment and prevention has started with federal funding. Any cuts to cancer research mean slowing progress, delaying new treatments, and putting lives at risk. Cuts to research funding, reductions in key staff, and spending freezes all jeopardize progress in the fight against cancer and undermine decades of momentum. *How will you protect vital funding for cancer research and prevention programs in Fiscal Year 2026?*



The CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control plays a crucial role in providing millions of screening exams, funding state cancer registries, providing technical assistance and funding to state cancer control programs, and educating the public directly on how to reduce their risk of cancer. Yet the Administration's budget proposal calls to eliminate this program. *Will you reject this proposed elimination and support continued funding for cancer prevention, early detection, and survivorship programs?*



The CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program has long provided women with cervical and breast cancer screening and follow-up care. Yet the Administration's budget proposal calls to eliminate the center where this program is housed. This is a gold standard program utilizing proven prevention and early detection programs to increase the number of women who are diagnosed with cancer who can go on to live healthy, happy, and productive lives. *Will you commit to rejecting any proposed cuts to and elimination of this critical CDC program? (If yes, follow up with, will you also cosponsor the SCREENS for Cancer Act to ensure this program receives the added funds and reauthorization?)*



The shuttering of the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health is jeopardizing public health advancements to reduce a primary cause of cancer and other chronic diseases by retreating from proven tobacco control efforts, which are critical for preventing unnecessary deaths. Tobacco use continues to be the number one cause of preventable death, and elimination of this agency will reverse decades of progress in combatting tobacco use. *Will you reject the Administration's elimination of the Office of Smoking and Health and work to ensure funding for this vital program?*

Protecting Cancer Cures

Research Talking Points



Cuts Have Consequences

Congress: Protect Cancer Cures

Core Message

Cancer has touched all of us in one way or another, and for years there has been a bipartisan commitment to reliable funding for our leading researchers and their institutions. But the current actions that have frozen funding, slashed staffing, and the talk of future funding cuts for lifesaving cancer research is unacceptable. These cuts will have life-threatening consequences. Fewer people will have access to clinical trials; researchers on the cusp of new discoveries will be forced to shut off the lights; hope will be lost. Cuts have consequences; we need Congress to protect cancer cures.

Talking Points

- **In 2025, over 2 million Americans are expected to be diagnosed with cancer**, with 18 million cancer survivors currently in the U.S.
- **Future cancer cures are in jeopardy** due to dramatic and unprecedented proposed reductions in research funding, staff eliminations, and policy shifts at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute (NCI).
- In the last 30 years, thanks to the federal government's substantial and steady increases in cancer research funding, **discovery and innovation have led to a 34% decline in cancer mortality rates.**
- **The last 10 years alone have seen the addition of an entirely new class of cancer therapeutics** in the form of immunotherapy, complementing previous standards of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy.
- **However, the Administration has recommended an \$18 billion cut to the NIH**, taking funding back to levels seen in 2003 and as far back as the mid-1990s when considering biomedical inflation.
- **Cuts have consequences.** And those consequences are life-threatening for cancer patients who could be waiting for the next clinical trial or research breakthrough.
- **Cuts to research funding would deal a devastating blow to cancer patients and their families**, and the United States could lose its global competitive edge in biomedical research.
- **Other countries, such as China, are ready to step in** to fill the void should the United States reduce federal funding for cancer research programs.
- As my voice in Congress, **I ask that you stand up for continued progress in the fight against cancer**, not take us backward.
- **This is not a partisan issue.** Cancer affects individuals and families across the political spectrum and across the country; everyone has a shared responsibility as we battle this disease.
- **Please support the highest possible funding for cancer research** with \$51.3 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and \$7.934 billion for cancer research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Protecting Cancer Cures

Call to Action & Talking Points



Congress: Protect Cancer Cures

Call to Action: The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network calls on Congress to support and protect funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's cancer programs. Cancer control programs, including tobacco control through the Office on Smoking and Health, play an indispensable role in the prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer. These programs save lives. Therefore, we ask that Congress provide \$482.9 million to the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control and \$310 million to the Office on Smoking and Health in FY26.

General Talking Points:

- ***Cancer prevention and early detection are critical*** in finding cancers early, at more treatable stages.
- ***At least 42% of newly diagnosed cancers in the U.S. are potentially preventable***, and the substantial costs of treating advanced disease could be reduced using existing fact-based strategies.
- **Earlier this year, policy changes at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** were announced, leading to the elimination of thousands of jobs and funding resources, including at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Without the workforce or infrastructure necessary to execute the programs and services at the CDC**, the country's leading public health agency could lose the ability to run the critical programs that have been proven to prevent and find cancer early when it is most treatable and survival rates are higher, as well as support cancer survivors.

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Cancer Prevention Program



- **The CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) plays a crucial role** in providing millions of screening exams, funding state cancer registries, providing technical assistance and funding to state cancer control programs, and educating the public directly on how to reduce their risk of cancer.
- **Because of the recent significant workforce reduction at CDC**, the public, health care professionals, cancer control organizations, and local, state, and federal policymakers may lose access to data that are used to determine where and how best to implement critical cancer control programs and funding for critical cancer prevention and early detection programs.
- **The Administration's proposed elimination** of the CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) would mean the complete elimination of these life-saving cancer programs and data resources.
- **The DCPC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program** has provided over 16.5 million screening exams to more than 6.5 million eligible people since the program's inception in 1991.
- **If the dramatic and alarming cuts included in the proposed budget** were enacted, it would lead to more preventable suffering and death from cancer, reversing course on the downward trend in cancer death rates.
- **We urge Congress to reject the Administration's proposed elimination** of the NCCDPHP and appropriate \$482.9 million for CDC's DCPC to continue to provide cancer prevention, early detection, and survivorship programs.



Protecting Cancer Cures

Tobacco Control & Office of Smoking and Health



- **The shuttering of the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health (OSH)** is jeopardizing public health advancements to reduce a primary cause of cancer and other chronic diseases by retreating from proven tobacco control efforts, which are critical for preventing unnecessary deaths.
- **Lost is the ability to collect data on** tobacco use rates, educate the public on the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke and the benefits of quitting, fund programs in all 50 states, DC, 28 tribes, and 8 territories to reduce tobacco use, including youth prevention programs and quitlines, and fund national media campaigns to promote quitting.
 - For example, the Tips campaign has led to more than 16.4 million people making a quit attempt and 1 million people who have successfully quit by developing a research- and audience-tested media campaign with ads that are placed on a variety of media channels and working directly with healthcare professionals and health systems.
- **With tobacco use continuing to be the number one cause** of preventable death, accounting for 30% of cancer deaths nationwide and more than \$600 billion in health-related expenses and lost productivity, these cuts threaten to reverse decades of progress in combating tobacco use and lives saved.
- **The vast majority of people who use tobacco start as kids** because of intentional targeting by the tobacco industry. These cuts to critically needed tobacco control programs give the tobacco industry free rein to addict and hurt a whole new generation.
- **We urge Congress to reject the Administration's elimination of CDC's OSH** and appropriate \$310 million in funds for CDC's OSH to prevent the loss of the significant strides we've made in combating tobacco use and protecting future generations.

Protecting Cancer Cures

BEFORE Town Hall Tweets



Today I'm attending the [insert town hall name] as a cancer advocate with @ACSCAN! Excited to hear where [insert lawmaker handle] stands on protecting lifesaving #CancerResearch and #CancerPrevention funding for cancer patients and their families.

Excited to attend the [insert town hall name] today as a cancer advocate with @ACSCAN! [insert lawmaker handle], I'm looking forward to hearing if you will commit to #ProtectCancerCures for everyone by supporting funding for vital #CancerResearch & #CancerPrevention programs.

#ProtectCancerCures

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AFTER Town Hall Tweets



Hi [insert lawmaker handle], I attended your Town Hall today but didn't have time to ask a question. On behalf of cancer patients, survivors & their families, will you support continued funding for lifesaving #CancerResearch & #CancerPrevention programs in FY26?

Thank you [insert lawmaker handle] for addressing my question about [insert brief description] at your Town Hall today. I'm counting on you to protect vital funding for #CancerResearch & #CancerPrevention programs in FY26.

Every new breakthrough in cancer treatment & prevention has started with federal funding. We can't jeopardize progress & undermine decades of momentum. [insert lawmaker handle], thank you for addressing this at your Town Hall today & committing to #ProtectCancerCures.

#ProtectCancerCures



TAKE ACTION

Sign the petition.

Cuts have consequences. Cancer patients and their families depend on lifesaving cancer research. Every new breakthrough in cancer treatment and prevention starts with federal funding. Cuts to cancer research mean slowing progress, delaying new treatments, and putting lives at risk.

Congress: Protect Cancer Cures!



**YOU CAN TAKE ACTION TODAY AND TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY
MEMBERS TO DO THE SAME.**