

ACS CAN Washington Cancer Action Day Pre-Lobby Training



January 2026



Our Vision:

End cancer as we know it, for everyone.

Our Mission:

To 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.



What is Cancer Action Day?

What is Cancer Action Day?

Get to know the event:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) works every day to ensure that elected officials and candidates prioritize the fight against cancer. ACS CAN champions evidence-based public policy solutions aimed at eliminating cancer as a major health concern.



What is Cancer Action Day?

What we do:

Cancer Action Day is a statewide event that serves as a powerful platform to elevate ACS CAN's visibility, advance our state legislative priorities and mobilize volunteers in collective action. By bringing advocates face-to-face with lawmakers, Cancer Action Day fosters personal connections that help translate lived experiences into policy impact



What is Cancer Action Day?

Let's Get Started!

While the format of Cancer Action Day varies by state, each event is held with a common purpose: to build long-term relationships with decision-makers, strengthen the voice of the cancer community and drive sustained progress in public health policy.

Whether held independently or in collaboration with coalition partners, these events can serve as a vital part long-term strategies to reduce the cancer burden and improve outcomes for all



What is our goal for Cancer Action Day?

Overall Goal:

The goal of Cancer Action Day Washington is to advance policy that supports cancer patients and their families through storytelling and educating lawmakers about the impacts of public health policy.

How do we get there?

By sharing personal stories and experiences about facing the burden of cancer during lobby days.

Cancer Action Day 2025 Highlights





Meet your Staff partners!



Meet Your Staff Partners



Audrey Miller Garcia, Government Relations
Director



Meet Your Staff Partners



Mary Kemp, Director of Grassroots Organizing



Meet Your Staff Partners



Anika Khan, Grassroots Program Manager



Meet Your Staff Partners



Shawn O'Neal Senior Regional Media Advocacy
Manager

Media Needs for CAD Washington

- Release on our activities/issues sent out statewide a week before the event to TV/radio/print/digital media in all parts of the state
- Possible interviews beforehand and during day
- Photos are helpful, especially with lawmakers. Send via text to Shawn O'Neal at 208.596.1314
- Personal relationships with media are helpful
- Letters to the Editor after the event (templates and support available)
- Questions/concerns/curiosities? Text or call Shawn any time.

Leaving room for change - Please note that these are projected priorities for 2026 leg session but may be subject to change due to the uncertainty of the current political landscape

Agenda for Cancer Action Day

Please be mindful, times & activities are subject to change

Tues. Jan 20th, 2026:

- 6-8pm Group Dinner and Fellowship in Olympia (if staying in hotel) – **Well80 at 6pm**
- 8-9pm Event room set up (volunteers welcome to help) - **DoubleTree by Hilton 415 Capitol Way N, Olympia**

Wed. Jan 21st, 2026:

8:00am-8:30am: Light breakfast at DoubleTree and Check-in

8:30am-11am: Legislative Training Session & Breakfast – **DoubleTree Olympia**

11am-4pm: Legislative meetings – **WA Capitol Building & Campus**

- 12pm Lunch at the capitol (in between meetings & Dome Deli)
- Box lunches will be provided
- Report back forms, thank you cards, social media posts & bingo card

3:00pm-3:30pm: Team Rally and Group photo at North Capitol Steps

- **3:30-4:00pm:** Lights of Hope Set-Up
- **4:00pm-4:45pm:** Display Photos
- **4:45-5:15pm:** Clean up and depart
- **5:15pm-6:30pm: Head to hotel & room clean up**
 - Closing the day and goodbyes

WA Capitol Grounds Map



Legislative Meeting Bldgs.

Legislative Building (LEG)

John L. O'Brien (JLOB)

John A. Cherberg (JAC)

Modular Building (LMB)

Add. Imp. Locations

● ADA Building Entrances & Parking

→ Pritchard Library (Find an ACS CAN team member with supplies)

● Cafe (LEG & Pritchard Library)

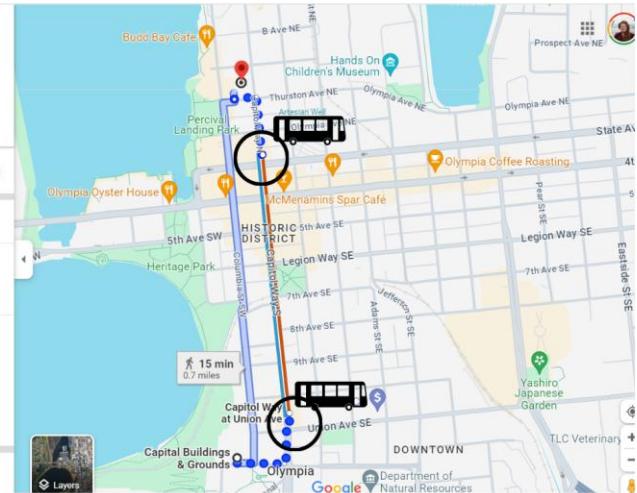
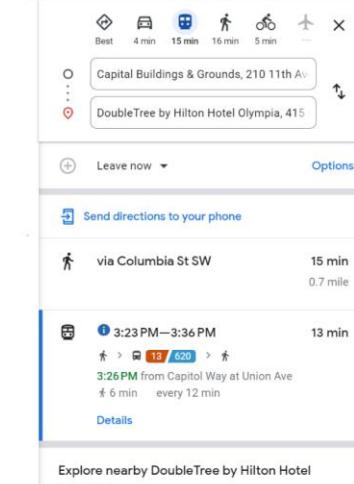


Bus Stop!

#WALeg
#CancerActionDay

5

How: Navigating to the Capitol & Back



- Walk 2.5 blocks to **Capitol Way & St. Ave** (stops every 12/15 min)
- Take **DASH Bus to Capitol Campus, stop at 11th Ave & Capitol Way**, Bus is **FREE**

6

#WALeg
#CancerActionDay

Helpful Links and Website Go-Tos

- Check out the **CAD Registration Page** to RSVP & Share
- Access to the **Event HUB** will be provided closer to the event. The Event HUB will be your landing page with every resource you need before, during & after CAD.

CAD Registration Page



2026 ACS CAN Washington Cancer Action Day

Wednesday, January 21, 2026 (All day) PST

DoubleTree Olympia
415 Capitol Way N
Olympia, WA 98501

[RSVP Here →](#)

In 2026, we're continuing to make our cancer-fighting voices heard in Washington State. Join us Wednesday January 21st!

Join our team and volunteers from across our state in the fight for legislative solutions to prevent and treat cancer. This year our priorities in Olympia include access to care through biomarker testing coverage, funding the Tobacco Prevention and Control program, and protecting access to cancer screenings for all Washingtonians. [Learn more about biomarker testing and why it's so important in the fight against cancer at our webpage here.](#)

Our legislative priorities will ensure access to quality care for patients today and help us fight cancer through prevention and life-saving screenings. By meeting with your lawmakers, you will help advance priorities to end cancer as we know it, for everyone.

Never participated in a meeting with your lawmaker? Don't worry! We will provide you with training and everything you will need to be successful. All you need is passion to make an impact in the fight against cancer.

If you have any questions, please contact Anika Khan Grassroots Program Manager anika.khan@cancer.org

Please hold Thursday, January 15th, 5 - 7 PM pst, for our virtual pre-event training. [Click here for the link!](#)

Are you worried at all about accessibility at the capitol? Please reach out to anika.khan@cancer.org with any needs you have and [check out this link to the legislature's accessibility information](#). This event will be barrier free!

Event Hub

WA 2026 Cancer Action Day Participant Info HUB

SHARE 



Join Us! We Can't End Cancer Without You!

Enter Your Email Address 

Your Support CAN fight Cancer

\$ Gift Amount 

Make this in honor of someone

Thank you for registering for Cancer Action Day!

Please see below for the important documents and information you will need for Cancer Action Day. These will be given to you in a folder during Cancer Action Day but you can download and review them today.

Contact Anika Khan anika.khan@cancer.org for questions.

Cancer Action Day Training Recording is here!

 [Check out the training here slides too.](#)

General Cancer Action Day Documents & Resources

[2025 ACS CAN Washington Legislative Agenda →](#)

CAD Meeting Schedule, subject to change.

- Want to learn more about who represents you in Olympia before our Feb. 3rd meetings? Simply check out this guide [How to Research Your Lawmakers | Power Analysis Homework](#)

 [Cancer Action Day Agenda](#)

 [Participant Packet](#)



2026 Legislative Asks

Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day

Connect Your Story to Legislative Asks

1. **Tobacco Control & Prevention Funding**
 - Increase the cigarette tax by **at least \$2 per pack**
 - **Restore funding** to the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program with the cigarette tax **at \$10mil/year**
2. Reduce Patient Medical Debt: **Support SB 5993** & prohibit interest on new medical debt
3. **No cuts to Medicaid/Apple Health Eligibility & Cascade Care**
4. **Coverage for Biomarker Testing – Support HB 1062**

**Participant Packet, fact sheets, and pre-training materials will be available prior to Cancer Action day

Leaving room for change - Please note that these are projected priorities for 2026 leg session but may be subject to change due to the uncertainty of the current political landscape

Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day: **Just Asks**

Connect Your Story to Legislative Asks

1. Will you support increasing the cigarette tax by at least \$2?
 1. Would you support dedicating \$10mil/year for tobacco prevention & cessation?
2. Will you support SB 5993 and prohibit interest on new medical debt?
3. Will you pledge to support no cuts to Medicaid/Apple Health Eligibility & Cascade Care?
4. Will you support HB 1062 and access to biomarker testing?

**Participant Packet, fact sheets, and pre-training materials will be available prior to Cancer Action day

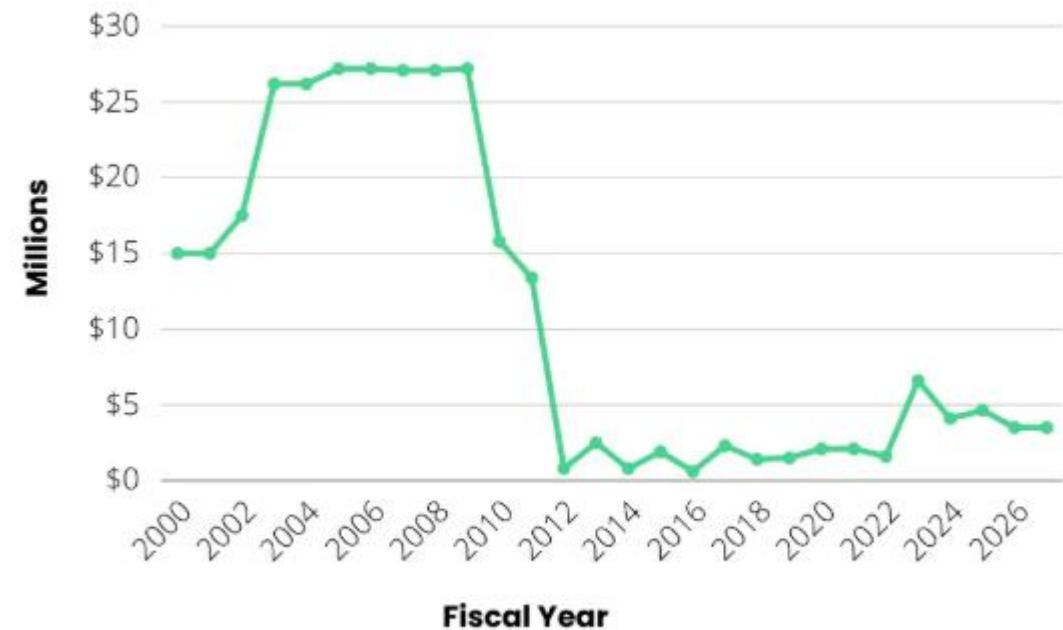
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Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day: **Top Data Points #1**

Tobacco Taxes & Prevention Funding

- Increasing tobacco taxes significantly is the most effective way to help people quit & prevent people from ever starting
- Tobacco directly costs Washington \$3.26B in healthcare expenditures
- By increasing the cigarette tax, WA could restore dedicated funding to the tobacco prevention and cessation program

State Funding History for Washington's Commercial Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Program (millions)



Total amounts show all state contributions to the program. Some information obtained from a data request to WA Department of Health and legislative records.

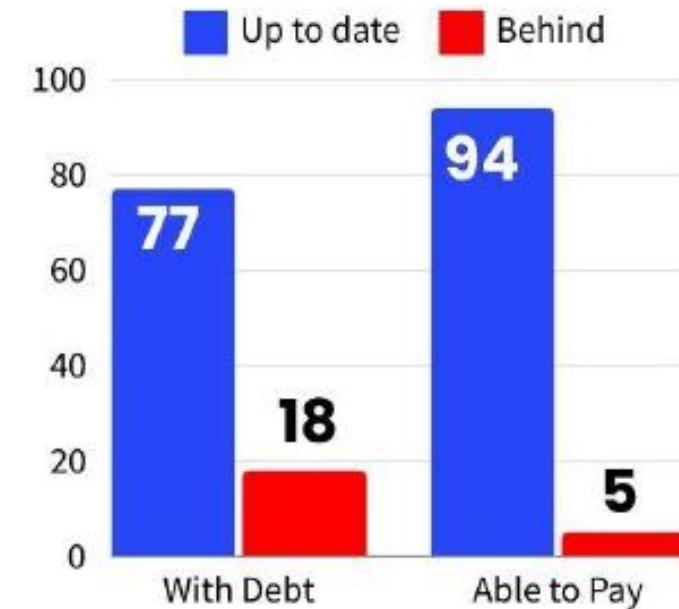
Source: Washington Breaths

Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day: Top Data Points #2

Medical Debt: Prohibiting Interest

- Nearly 47% of cancer patients and survivors surveyed by ACS CAN have had medical debt related to their cancer
- Those with cancer related medical debt are **three times** more likely to be behind on recommended cancer screenings
- 98% of patients surveyed had health coverage at the time they accumulated the debt

Those with cancer debt are more than 3x as likely to be behind on screenings

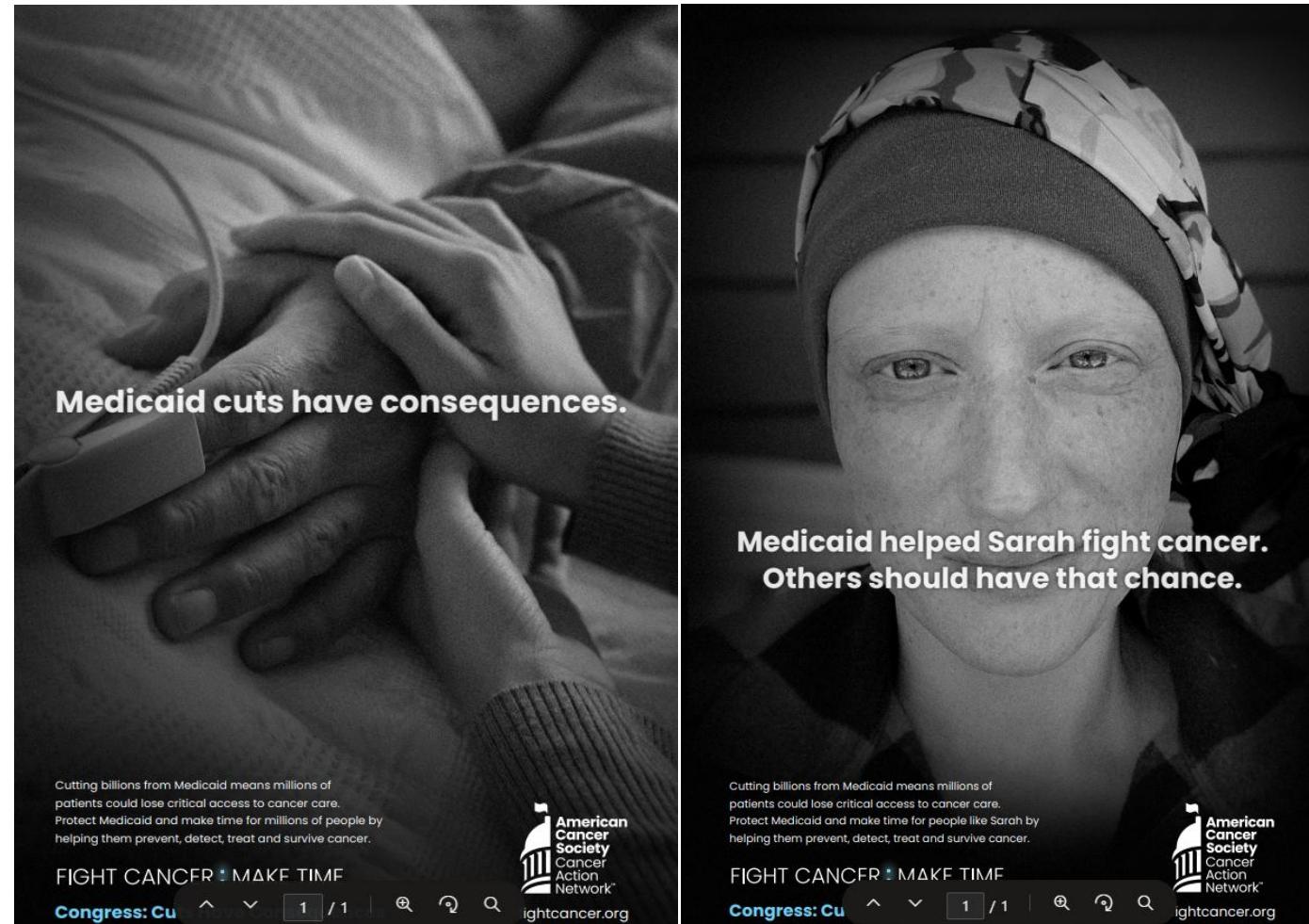


Source: ACS CAN Medical Debt Factsheet

Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day: **Top Data Points #3**

Medicaid/Apple Health Eligibility & Cascade Care

- 1 in 10 people with a history of cancer rely on Medicaid for their health coverage
- Late-stage cancer costs are up to 7 times higher than the costs to treat earlier-stage cancer
- 1 in 3 children diagnosed with cancer were found to be enrolled in Medicaid at the time

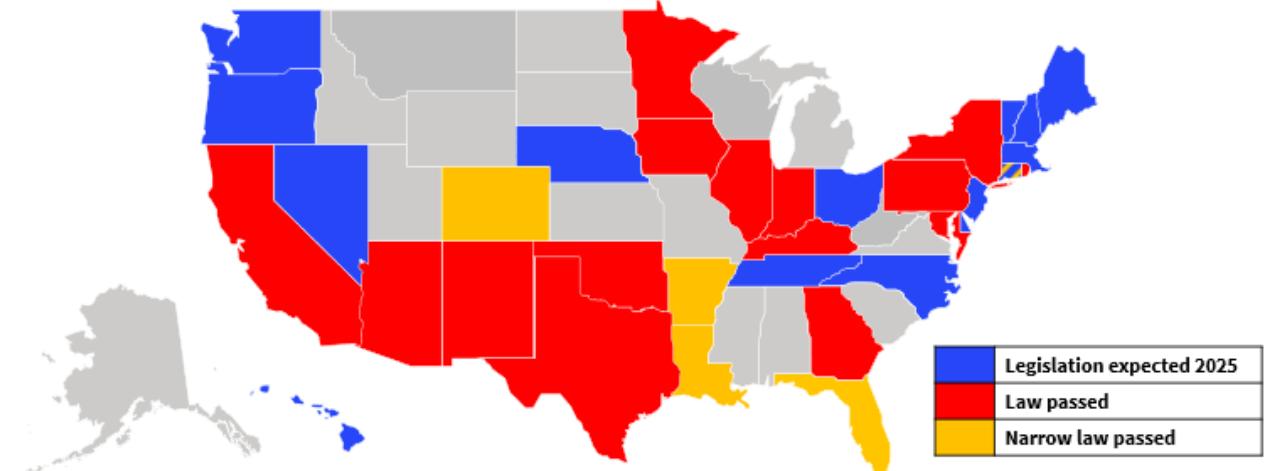


Source: ACS CAN

Legislative Asks for Cancer Action Day: **Top Data Points #4**

Biomarker Testing Coverage

- Timely access to comprehensive biomarker testing coverage can increase outcomes, improve quality of life & reduce costs
- Nearly 60% of all cancer drugs approved in the last 5 years require or recommend biomarker testing before use
- Research shows that people of color – particularly Black people – are not benefitting from biomarker testing at the same rates that whites are



Legislation enacted: AZ, AR*, CA, CO*, CT**, FL**, GA, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA*, MD, MN, NM, NY, OK, PA, RI, TX
2025 legislation anticipated: CT*, DE, HI, MA, ME, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NC, OH, OR, TN, VT, WA
* Private plans only **Public plans only

22 States Have Passed Biomarker Testing Coverage Legislation

Source: ACS CAN



What is your role?

Your role during Cancer Action Day

Connect Your Story to Legislative Asks

- Connect your personal story, to our legislative asks to create a powerful message of advocacy for cancer patients, their caregivers and families.
- Identify your “why” reason for cancer advocacy. Why are you doing this work? What's your “why”?

What to do when meetings are completed:

- Report Back Form (high priority)
- Sign and address thank you cards for your legislature
- Complete bingo card to be entered in a raffle for a prize!

Attend end of day rally and Lights of Hope Event

- Invite your lawmaker to attend Lights of Hope at North Capital Steps

Make social media posts during cancer action day!

- Post photos/videos
- Meet with media! (Connect with Shawn)
- Share the event on Facebook when its live



The power of Storytelling

The power of Story Telling

Connecting your person stories to our asks:

- Connect your personal story, to our legislative asks to create a powerful message of advocacy for cancer patients, their caregivers and families.
- **Example for an ask:** *“Hello representative, I’m here today to talk about increasing the tobacco tax in our state. My mother was a lifelong smoker and impacted by lung cancer. By increasing the tax, we can prevent others from experiencing the same burden of cancer.”*

Your stories helps us:

- **Guide Policy Priorities:** Your experience reveals gaps. Maybe you struggled to access treatment, navigate insurance, or find support. These insights help lawmakers identify where systems are failing.
- **Drive urgency:** Personal testimony can be the tipping point that moves a bill forward or secures critical funding.
- **Shapes legislation:** Personal stories have led to increased research funding, expanded screening programs, and better patient protections.

**The American Cancer Society exists because
the burden of cancer is unacceptably high.**



Thank You