

ACS CAN Supports the Women and Lung Cancer Research and Preventive Services Act of 2023 (H.R. 4534/S. 2245)

Background

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women in the U.S. In fact, more people die of lung cancer than colon, breast and prostate cancers combined. In 2023 alone, an estimated 238,340 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed and an estimated 127,070 people will die from the disease.

Research is needed to determine if there are unique factors for women with respect to lung cancer. Despite historically lower smoking rates than men, women are estimated to make up over half of all new lung cancer cases (120,790 women and 117,550 men) and nearly half of all deaths (59,910 women and 67,160 men) in 2023. Furthermore, women have a slightly higher proportion of lung cancer not attributable to modifiable risk factors, like smoking. The differential outcomes among women who do not smoke for early clinical trials of the drug Iressa identified one of the first biomarker-driven targeted drug pathways in lung cancer. Currently there are at least seven biomarkers that drive treatment decisions in lung cancer.

A clear, comprehensive understanding of the existing research and new, innovative opportunities to reduce lung cancer mortality, particularly among women, is critically needed.

Bill Summary

The Women and Lung Cancer Research and Preventive Services Act of 2023 (H.R. 4534/S. 2245) – introduced by Representatives Brendan F. Boyle (D-PA-2) and Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) – requires the Department of Health and Human Services, working with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, to conduct an interagency review to evaluate the status of and identify opportunities for research on women and lung cancer including access to lung cancer preventive services, and strategic public awareness and education campaigns on lung cancer. In particular, the review should include:

- A report on the status of federal research on women and lung cancer, including knowledge gaps.
- Opportunities for collaborative federal interagency research to encourage innovation, evaluate environmental and genomic factors related to lung cancer in women, and foster advances in technology for prevention, risk assessment, diagnosis and treatment.
- Opportunities to develop a national lung cancer screening strategy with sufficient resources to reach underserved populations.
- Opportunities to develop a national public education and awareness campaign on women and lung cancer and the importance of early detection.

ACS CAN's Position

ACS CAN supports the Women and Lung Cancer Research and Preventive Services Act of 2023 by to accelerate progress in reducing mortality from lung cancer, including among women.