

CHARLENE MIERS FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH

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September 29, 2011

Honorable Jeb Hensarling
U. S. House of Representatives
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Patty Murray
U. S. Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

RE: Budget Control Act of 2011; Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction;
Recommendations; Cancer Research Funding

Dear Representative Hensarling and Senator Murray:

We urge you and Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to recommend legislative language pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 to maintain and/or increase appropriations to the National Cancer Institute and Centers of Disease Control and Prevention for research and programs to prevent, diagnose, treat, control and cure cancer.

At least \$5.8 billion should be recommended to be appropriated annually to the National Cancer Institute, to the extent and for as long as needed to cure cancer, including fiscal years 2012 through 2021.

Our foundation is a not for profit cancer advocacy organization in Tulsa, Oklahoma, named and established in honor of Charlene B. Miers who was diagnosed to have incurable brain cancer on her birthday in 2006, and died on November 10, 2007, after heroically trying to overcome the disease through surgery, radiation and chemotherapy for 17 months. We advocate increased research to find the cause and how to prevent and cure cancer.

Funding cancer research through the National Cancer Program directed by the National Cancer Institute is essential and prudent. Cancer is prematurely killing millions of Americans; and is costing our country billions of dollars. There are not any "offsets" of any kind to balance out these constant horrific losses of life, health, productivity and resources. However, increased research can find ways to reduce and hopefully end them.

Cancer causes death of more than 571,000 persons in the United States a year. More than 1,500 people die of cancer every day, meaning a person dies of cancer in the United States every minute. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2011*, www.cancer.org/Research/CancerFactsFigures/index/. Preceding many of those deaths is a terrible physical and emotional struggle lasting months or years for the victims of the disease and their families.

Cancer is costing the United States \$263.8 billion annually, which includes \$102.8 billion for direct medical costs (total of all health expenditures), \$20.9 billion for indirect morbidity costs (cost of lost productivity due to illness) and \$140.1 billion in indirect mortality costs (cost of lost productivity due to premature death). *Cancer Facts & Figures 2011*, www.cancer.org/Research/CancerFactsFigures/index/.

A study released in January, 2011, indicates based on growth and aging of the U. S. population, medical expenditures for cancer in the year 2020 are projected to reach at least \$158 billion (in 2010 dollars) -- an increase of 27 percent over 2010. The report indicates that if newly developed tools for cancer diagnosis, treatment, and follow-ups continue to be more expensive, medical expenditures could reach \$207 billion annually. www.nih.gov/news/health/jan2011/nci-12.htm

Approximately one in two men and one in three women will have cancer in their lifetime. More than 1,500,000 new cancer cases will occur this year in the United States; and there are over 11 million cancer patients or persons with a history of cancer in the United States. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2011*, www.cancer.org/Research/CancerFactsFigures/index/.

While progress has been made in diagnosing cancer earlier, and providing more effective treatments, more than 30% of cancer patients will not survive 5 years. Published information indicates there are certain most deadly forms of cancer that still cannot be treated with hope of success.

Harold Varmus, M.D., Noble Prize winning scientist and Director of the National Cancer Institute, has commenced an aggressive provocative questions project to utilize all available resources for our country's best cancer scientists to ask and answer the most questions that can lead to significant discoveries for ending cancer. This plan to concentrate the thoughts and efforts of our most imaginative and skilled researchers to cure cancer should be given whatever funding is needed. Our organization has recommended that this project focus on finding the cause and ways to prevent and cure metastatic cancer which results in most cancer deaths.

In recent years less than one-third (1/3) of promising cancer research projects of our leading scientists, institutes and universities requesting National Cancer Institute funding received needed grants. Increased funding to stop cancer's tragic mortality rate, and huge financial cost of the disease in your Congressional district and State, and elsewhere all across the United States, is urgently needed now.

Though appropriations by Congress for that research may be classified as "discretionary", we believe there is no acceptable choice but to make whatever investment is needed on science that can find a cure at the earliest possible date.

Because of the extent of death and financial loss from cancer suffered in our country we believe federal expenditures for scientific research through the National Cancer Institute must be *increased* in fiscal years 2012 and 2021. This should be accomplished by spending reductions and savings in programs involving less urgent needs.

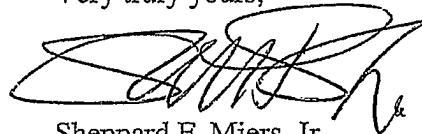
The National Cancer Institute in its most recent fiscal year budget request (for FY 2012) to the President of the United States authorized by the National Cancer Act of 1971, requested \$5,869,857,000 be appropriated to maintain its operations and increase urgently needed cancer research under the National Cancer Program. www.cancer.gov/aboutnci/budget_planning_leg/plan

That amount is based on the scientific estimation and no less than that should be recommended by the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction to continue to be appropriated to the National Cancer Institute in the future.

We ask you to please find a way to recommend increased federal appropriations be made for predictable long-term funding of essential scientific research programs on cancer.

Thank you for considering this letter, and recommending increased appropriations needed to cure cancer as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



Sheppard F. Miers, Jr.

President, Director
Charlene Miers Foundation
for Cancer Research

cc: Honorable James Inhofe
Honorable Tom Coburn
Honorable John Sullivan
Honorable Tom Cole