

## **TULSA WORLD**

### **Letter to the Editor: Cancer research**

**Sheppard F. Miers Jr., Tulsa | Posted: Saturday, January 25, 2014 12:00 am**

Projected cancer death and incidence statistics for 2014 reflect an urgent need for research and discovery.

The numbers trend up from last year, the wrong direction. An estimated 585,720 cancer deaths and 1,665,540 new cancer cases will occur in the United States in 2014. This means 1,600 persons will die of cancer each day, or one life lost each minute.

The findings are in "Cancer Statistics, 2014," in the American Cancer Society's journal, "CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians."

Congress recently approved additional research funding to the National Cancer Institute. But it was only a partial reprieve from damaging effects of the federal budget "sequester" on institute research grants. Those federal grants fund the most promising projects of top U.S. scientists, including researchers at the Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma.

Even greater support is needed to discover causes of cancer and treatments to stop its wide-spread tragic effect. The most recent scientific-based institute request to the president for funding a best case U.S. cancer research program was almost \$1 billion more than Congress has approved. The urgent need to pay for the best science available starkly continues in 2014 to discover how to stop cancer, and to save more than a half million lives.

Anyone can be effective advocating for more federal government funding of cancer research. Continuing messages to Congress make a difference. You can do it quickly, and often, online at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network website.

Editor's note: Miers is director of the Charlene Miers Foundation for Cancer Research.