

CANCER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

A PATIENT-CENTERED FORUM OF NATIONAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS
ADDRESSING PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN CANCER

September 3, 2025

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Chair
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Crapo and Ranking Member Wyden:

The undersigned organizations represent people with cancer; the doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals who care for them; caregivers; and families and friends. We write in advance of the September 4, 2025, hearing on The President's 2026 Health Care Agenda at which Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. is scheduled to appear. We address the overall FY 2026 health agenda, with an emphasis on the recent events at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and their impact on the cancer community.

When a person hears the words, "you have cancer," they begin a complicated journey. They immediately seek reliable data to understand their diagnosis – the type and stage of their cancer and their prognosis. Then they seek information about treatment options that are best for them, and on their journey of living with, through, and beyond cancer they seek information about living well with cancer. In this journey, the federal government has been a reliable partner to them.

Progress in the fight against cancer has been fueled by the public investment in research and development, with many cancer patients now enjoying cures or long periods of survival after diagnosis. Not all cancers are curable, but progress continues. Many cancer patients benefit from early diagnosis, including through federal screening efforts. And some Americans avoid a cancer diagnosis, as they benefit from cancer prevention efforts. After treatment, cancer survivors receive support in their survivorship.

CDC supports a wide range of programs that are important to preventing cancer, controlling cancer, and serving the needs of those with cancer. These include programs that are “cancer-specific” and others that are not solely targeted to cancer but that address cancer issues and cancer patients’ needs. These efforts include:

- Cancer Prevention and Control
 - National Program of Cancer Registries
 - Colorectal Cancer Control Program
 - National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.
 - National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program
- Office on Smoking and Health

All of the cancer programs we identify above are effective and helpful to cancer patients because they provide interventions or information that are data-driven. For example, the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program follows evidence-based screening guidelines. The National Program of Cancer Registries, as a system for collecting cancer data, helps inform all CDC programs and all federal cancer initiatives. The data from the registries help keep us on track in national cancer efforts.

We also include the immunization program at CDC as an important cancer program. It is critically important that people with cancer and their team receive clear guidance about vaccines. Because cancer patients may at times be immune compromised, their vaccination needs must be carefully defined by evidence.

The programs identified above are successful because they are driven by science and they are designed to reach cancer patients where they are geographically and where they are in their cancer journey.

We are concerned that the firing of the CDC Director and the resignations of four CDC leaders will result in a departure from the reliance on science as the guiding principle for CDC programs. Some of those departing have made clear that they could no longer remain at the agency because they could not be assured that science would govern the work of CDC.

CDC must be restored to an agency that relies on science. That means that the staff, from the Director down, must be tasked with evaluating evidence in making decisions and must be protected from political pressures. Advisory committees must be staffed by individuals with the training, expertise, and experience to support their providing solid and unbiased advice on public health matters.

We trust that these issues will be the topic of questioning and discussion at the September 4 hearing.

Sincerely,

Cancer Leadership Council

Academy of Oncology Nurse & Patient Navigators (AONN+)

Association of Oncology Social Work

CancerCare

Cancer Nation (formerly National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship)

Children's Cancer Cause

Fight Colorectal Cancer

LUNgevity Foundation

Lymphoma Research Foundation