



APRIL 13, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

As members of the Coalition to Improve Access to Cancer Care (CIACC), we represent various stakeholders who serve cancer patients across the nation. While the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, we are concerned about their lack of access to life-saving therapies.

As you develop the fourth coronavirus stimulus bill, we hope you consider including the *Cancer Drug Parity Act (H.R. 1730)*. This bipartisan bill could substantially help vulnerable cancer patients concerned about going to the hospital for their chemotherapy infusions. The bill addresses this by improving patient access to other forms of treatment. Cancer patients are uniquely at risk to contract COVID-19 due to their compromised immune systems. To help alleviate this burden, oncologists are reexamining the best ways to treat patients during this pandemic.

Members of the CIACC have been in communication with oncology care medical professionals who are advising patients to stay at home as much as possible. When medically appropriate, they are transitioning these patients onto oral (or self-administered) chemotherapy drugs in order to achieve this goal. This further necessitates the need for the *Cancer Drug Parity Act*, which will ensure patients are paying similar out-of-pocket costs equitable to their IV therapies while remaining safe in their homes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further revealed a discrepancy patients face in their out-of-pocket costs for oral chemotherapy drugs in contrast to what they pay for IV therapies. As you may know, many cancer patients today are covered under antiquated insurance benefit designs which require patients to pay more out-of-pocket costs for anticancer treatments delivered by pill instead of IV. This discrepancy is simply based on the form of administration. Unfortunately, with COVID-19 this unnecessary discrepancy in cost-sharing means that many cancer patients face greater financial barriers to oral anticancer therapies. Simply put, this places patients and their families at risk of contracting COVID-19 and the *Cancer Drug Parity Act* would mitigate this risk.

Cancer patients who are able to stay safe at home will help flatten the curve and limit overwhelming their local health care system with additional complications should they contract COVID-19 or require care due to rapid cancer progression from lack of proper treatment.

We are very appreciative of your hard work during this COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the American people are given all of the necessary tools to survive and thrive during these unprecedented times. The cancer community stands ready to work with you to continue to move policy changes forward that will allow cancer patients to access lifesaving cancer treatment. Thank you in advance for considering the *Cancer Drug Parity Act* as part of the fourth coronavirus stimulus package.

For further questions about the need for this legislation, please contact Robin Roland Levy, Senior Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the International Myeloma Foundation at 201-220-9137 or rlevy@myeloma.org.

Respectfully,

AIM at Melanoma
Alliance for Patient Access
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Society of Hematology
Aplastic Anemia and MDS International Foundation
Association for Clinical Oncology
Association of Community Cancer Centers
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
CancerCare
Cancer and Careers/CEW Foundation
Cancer Support Community
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Debbie's Dream Foundation: Curing Stomach Cancer
Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE)
Fight Colorectal Cancer
GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association
International Myeloma Foundation
Karmanos Cancer Institute
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
LUNgevity
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Medical College of Wisconsin
National Brain Tumor Society
National Comprehensive Cancer Network*
National Patient Advocate Foundation
Oncology Nursing Society
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance
Patient Access Network
Patient Services, Incorporated
Roswell Park Cancer Comprehensive Cancer Center
Seattle Cancer Care Alliance
Susan G. Komen
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center-James Cancer Hospital and Richard J Solove Institute
WVU Medicine
Zero – The End of Prostate Cancer

* Cancer Community Partner, Non-CIACC member