



July 8, 2021

The Honorable Diana DeGette
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Fred Upton
2183 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: 21st Century Cures 2.0 Discussion Draft

Dear Representative DeGette and Representative Upton:

On behalf of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), which represents the interests of the 110,000 U.S. oncology nurses, I write to thank you for your continued leadership and efforts to safely and efficiently modernize the delivery of treatments to patients. Your latest Cures 2.0 discussion draft contains important proposals that will further advance the critical work of the *21st Century Cures Act* in improving the discovery, development, and delivery of cancer treatments in this country.

ONS supports the efforts in *Title II: Patients and Caregivers* to increase access to clinical trials among populations that are typically underrepresented in current clinical trial enrollment, and appreciates that Cures 2.0 contains provisions to increase clinical trial diversity. Benefits of clinical trials can range from extension of life, to disease stabilization, and/or enhanced symptom management. Thus, ONS supports unencumbered access to participation in clinical trials for comprehensive cancer care delivery and strongly advocates that racial, financial, and cultural access barriers to clinical trials be eliminated.

We are especially pleased that Cures 2.0 includes provisions in *Title IV: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services* to expand access to genetic testing and to test approaches for the delivery of precision medicine. Advances in the understanding and application of cancer genetics and genomics have dramatically changed the practice and implementation of cancer risk assessment, risk reduction, prevention, screening, diagnosis, therapeutics, and options for personalized health care. These important innovations have the potential to shape the future of cancer detection and treatment for patients.

ONS is also particularly interested in *Title V: Research* – the creation and authorization of President Biden’s Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), a new federal research agency that would provide resources to cure some of the world’s most devastating diseases, including cancer. Through investments in new resources for medical research and innovation, the *21st Century Cures Act* has supported better treatment and quality of life for patients across the country, particularly patients with a diagnosis of cancer, and ARPA-H would build on this success.

ONS stands ready to work with you and your staff to support continued innovation in our health care system. We would be happy to discuss ways in which ONS may be of assistance in this endeavor and would encourage you to contact Alec Stone, Director of Public Affairs, at astone@ons.org. We look forward to engaging in an ongoing dialogue to address issues of importance to our cancer patients and ways in which we can promote public health.

Sincerely,

The Oncology Nursing Society