

DEBBIE'S DREAM FOUNDATION: CURING STOMACH CANCER CONGRESSIONAL MEETING "CHEAT SHEET"

INTRODUCE YOURSELF

- Say where you live.
- Explain why you are participating in virtual advocacy day. Share your story.
- Say thank you if the lawmaker has been helpful in the past.
- Share your story.

UNFINISHED SPENDING BILL BUSINESS

- Complete the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 spending bills without further delay and provide:
 - at least the House-passed \$6.56 billion for the National Cancer Institute; and
 - the Senate's \$130 million for the Department of Defense's (DoD) Peer Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP).
- A full-year continuing resolution would be devastating for cancer research. NCI interim paylines have been set well below anticipated levels and non-competing grants are being cut by 10% during this period of uncertainty.

PEER REVIEWED CANCER RESEARCH PROGRAM

- Maintain stomach cancer in the PRCRP in FY 2023 and increase program funding.
- Stomach cancer is service connected, including because service members who are deployed are at risk of *H. pylori*, the leading risk factor of stomach cancer.
- There are few effective treatments for stomach cancer and diagnosis often occurs at a late stage.
- Sign letter to Appropriations Defense Subcommittee asking that stomach cancer remain in the PRCRP. The letter is being led by Reps. Frankel and Kinzinger in the House, and Sen. Hirono in the Senate.
- Stomach cancer has been in the PRCRP for 8 years.
- To date, the PRCRP has supported nearly \$24 million in stomach cancer research.

NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

- Increase FY 2023 funding for the National Cancer Institute to \$7.766 billion
- Thank you for past NIH and NCI funding increases.
- Share your excitement that the NCI has launched the *Ad Hoc Working Group on Gastric and Esophageal Cancer*. In FY 2020, Congress took a critical step forward in the fight against stomach cancer by directing NCI to develop a “strategic plan” for research on gastric and esophageal cancer. NCI has made important progress in implementing that directive with the launching of this Working Group which will identify stomach cancer research needs and opportunities. **Increased NCI funding is needed to bridge knowledge gaps of this historically under-researched cancer.**
- Demand for NCI grants continues to outpace funding and deters researchers, particularly in cancers where the science is immature. Increasing NCI’s budget ensures promising cancer research gets funded.

OTHER POINTS

- Without availability and certainty of federal funding, scientists will not pursue stomach cancer research.
- Incidence of certain types of stomach cancer appear to be increasing, including in younger adults, even though overall stomach cancer rates are declining.
- 80% percent of patients are asymptomatic during the early stages. Late diagnosis = low survival rates. Advance stage stomach cancer survival rate is 6%.
- More than 26,000 Americans will be diagnosed with stomach cancer this year; 11,000 will die.