



July 16, 2020

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Garrett Grigsby
Director
Office of Global Affairs
U.S. Department of Health and
Human Services
Room 639H, 200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

John Barsa
Acting Administrator
U.S. Agency for International
Development
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20523-1000

Secretary Michael R. Pompeo
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear President Trump:

The undersigned cancer organizations, representing patients, cancer care providers, researchers, and caregivers, are writing to urge you to reconsider your withdrawal of the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO). Our organizations work throughout the United States and the world to provide cancer patients with high-quality cancer care, patient access to clinical trials, to reduce the financial burden of cancer, and to support patients throughout their care.

We support the WHO's commitment to excellence in international health and their adherence to the United Nations values of integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity. Though the WHO works to improve standards of health and access to treatment in a variety of non-communicable and infectious diseases, we are writing specifically in support of their efforts in the prevention and management of cancer.

In 2018, the global cancer burden rose to 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million cancer deaths,ⁱ making cancer the second-leading cause of death worldwide. Moreover, the burden of cancer in low and mid-resource countries is significant and growing, accounting for approximately 75% percent of all cancer deaths worldwide.ⁱⁱ It is our hope that our organizations, in conjunction with the efforts of the WHO, will continue to work on reducing these numbers significantly in the coming years. However, this collective goal will not be possible without the United States continued commitment and support of the WHO.

Researchers working within the United States also benefit from the WHO global health communication channels. To continue the rapid progress of oncology research in the United States, it is essential that researchers have access to information provided by the WHO. The exchange of information directly benefits cancer patients both domestically and internationally.

On January 28, 2020, the United States House of Representatives passed the Global Hope Act of 2020. Sponsored by Congressman Michael McCaul (R-TX), and cosponsored by a group of 20 bipartisan representatives, the Global Hope Act specifically supported the notion that, "the United States should work to support the goals of the World Health Organization Initiative for Childhood Cancer, helping increase survival rates for children with cancer." The Global Initiative for Childhood

Cancer's goal is to achieve at least a 60-percent survival rate for children with cancer by 2030, saving an additional 1,000,000 lives. Acute leukemia is one of the most common blood cancers in children and one of six areas of focus in this initiative. It is our belief that the United States should work with the WHO on this important initiative to improve early diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care for children with cancer around the world.

In addition to working to reduce the number of instances of cancer in children, the WHO is working tirelessly to address the global burden of cervical cancer, a mostly preventable disease when effective primary (HPV vaccination) and secondary prevention approaches (screening for, and treating precancerous lesions) are implemented. The WHO's Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative provides resources to governments, patients, and physicians for solutions to prevent and treat cervical cancer. Additionally, the WHO provides valuable resources on pain management and palliative care.

The United States designates funding—in the form of specified voluntary contributions—to support specific programs that work to reduce the global cancer burden. This includes programs that increase access to essential health and nutrition services, programs that work to eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases, and programs that establish effective coordination and operations support. Between 30-50% of all cancers are preventable and supporting programs that modernize health systems and patient access to care is imperative to reduce the burden of cancer.ⁱⁱⁱ The WHO consistently works to reduce preventable cancers by working with low and mid-resource countries on cancer control and prevention by providing resources on healthy diet and exercise, tobacco use, and vaccinations. Continued support of cancer control and prevention efforts will reduce the number of cancer deaths globally.

In order to achieve a more equitable global healthcare system that meaningfully benefits patients around the world, collective global partnership and multilateralism is critical. We strongly support continued membership in the WHO in order to support their continued efforts to reduce the cancer burden in the United States and around the world.

Sincerely,

National Comprehensive Cancer Network® (NCCN®)
American Association of Cancer Research
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Society of Hematology
American Society for Radiation Oncology
Association for Clinical Oncology
Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses
CancerCare
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association

Cc: Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader

Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Senate Minority Leader

Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives

Honorable Kevin McCarthy, House Minority Leader

Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee

Honorable, Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee

Honorable Lindsey Graham, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations

Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations

Honorable Hal Rogers, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs

Honorable James E. Risch, Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Honorable Bob Menendez, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Foreign
Relations

Honorable Eliot L. Engel, Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Honorable Michael T. McCaul, Ranking Member, House Committee on Foreign
Affairs

ⁱ WHO. Latest global cancer data: Cancer burden rises to 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million cancer deaths in 2018. September 12, 2018.

<https://www.who.int/cancer/PRGlobocanFinal.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Prager GW, Braga S, Bystricky B, et al. Global cancer control: responding to the growing burden, rising costs and inequalities in access. 2018;3(2):e000285.

ⁱⁱⁱ WHO. Cancer: Key Facts. September 12, 2018. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cancer>