

September 22, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: America's Healthy Future Act of 2009**

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

The Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Advocacy Alliance appreciates your attention to pre-existing conditions, prevention and early detection in the Chairman's Mark of the "America's Healthy Future Act of 2009." We support your goal of ensuring access to affordable, high-quality health care for all Americans, including people who are currently deemed uninsurable because they have a preexisting condition like cancer.

The Komen Advocacy Alliance is the nonpartisan voice for more than 2.5 million breast cancer survivors and the people who love them. Our mission is to translate the Komen promise to end breast cancer forever into action at all levels of government to discover and deliver the cures. Cancer patients and survivors have some of the most challenging experiences with the health care system at a time in their lives when they are most vulnerable. Thus, the Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Advocacy Alliance believes that health reform must:

- Increase investment in federal and state programs for underserved patients
- Protect cancer patients from excessive out-of-pocket costs
- Ensure access to affordable, high-quality insurance for all, including those with pre-existing conditions
- Enhance quality and value by focusing on prevention, wellness, and chronic disease management
- Address the shortage of cancer care specialists

The current draft of the America's Healthy Future Act of 2009 addresses many of these priorities. However, there are two additional issues that should be included in the bill: extending access to patient navigation services to help guide patients through the complex health care system, and ensuring access to clinical trials.

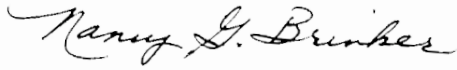
Patient Navigation: Navigating the complex health care system can be an insurmountable task for patients facing a complicated or chronic disease, especially if they are underserved, have a lower level of medical literacy, or do not speak or read English well. Patient navigators are trained to serve as personal guides and help people overcome obstacles to receiving timely cancer treatment and care. Patient navigation is a proven concept that is cost-effective, promotes prevention, saves lives, and addresses health disparities. We respectfully request that the Committee reauthorize and fully fund the Patient Navigator Outreach and Chronic Disease Prevention Act of 2005 (PL 109-18) for five years, FY2011 through FY2015. Current authorization expires at the end of FY2010.

Clinical Trials: Each year, thousands of people gain access to the highest-quality cancer care and receive new treatments before they are widely available by participating in a clinical trial. Millions more benefit from the findings. Yet, while more than 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed with cancer each year, fewer than 5 percent will participate in an approved clinical trial. Some health insurance companies do not cover routine medical care expenses for patients enrolled in approved clinical trials, or refuse to

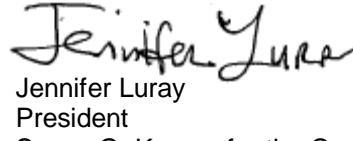
cover complications that sometimes occur during the course of an approved clinical trial. Failure to cover these items may mean otherwise-eligible people are turned away, or are exposed to high out-of-pocket costs when they encounter complications. These issues could be addressed by including language from the "Access to Cancer Clinical Trials Act" (S.488) by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Ambassador Nancy G. Brinker  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance



Jennifer Luray  
President  
Susan G. Komen for the Cure Advocacy Alliance