

The 21st Century Cancer ALERT Act (S.717)

In March, Senators Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) introduced the 21st Century Cancer ALERT (Access to Life-saving Early Detection, Research and Treatment) Act in the U.S. Senate. Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA) is taking a leadership role in the House and other Members may join as the bill is developed. The ALERT Act has several features:

- **Early Detection** — The ALERT Act **emphasizes prevention and early detection**. It promotes the discovery and development of biomarkers to detect cancers at the earliest possible stage when cancer is most treatable, as well as access to existing technologies for underserved populations.
- **Research** — The ALERT Act **strengthens cancer research** by promoting public-private partnerships and collaboration between government agencies. The bill also focuses on translational research so new discoveries in the laboratory make their way to patients as quickly as possible.
- **Treatment** — The ALERT Act **improves access to treatments and cancer care** by expanding access to clinical trials and patient navigation services, promoting coordination of cancer care, and strengthening the oncology workforce.

WHY DO WE NEED THE ALERT ACT?

- In 1971, the United States declared war on cancer. Despite momentous strides and life-saving advances since then, the fundamental goal of the war — to diminish death and suffering from cancer — has not been fully realized. The U.S. must reignite the war on cancer and remove barriers to discovering and delivering the cures for cancer.
- Cancer costs the U.S. \$219 billion each year and claims more than 560,000 lives — almost 1,500 a day. The disease inflicts incalculable physical pain and emotional distress on cancer patients and their families. Forty percent of Americans will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives; 1.4 million new cases will be diagnosed this year alone.
- There are racial, ethnic, geographic and socioeconomic disparities in access to cancer care. Underserved populations lack access to basic health care services like cancer screening, and are more likely to be diagnosed at later stages and receive lower standards of care. Uninsured cancer patients are 60 percent more likely to die than those with health insurance.



REQUESTED ACTION:

Reignite the War on Cancer — Cosponsor the 21st Century Cancer ALERT Act (S. 717)

For more information about the Komen Advocacy Alliance or cancer in your state, contact Shelley Fuld Nasso, Director of Public Policy at sfuldnasso@komenadvocacy.org, or visit www.KomenAdvocacy.org.

The Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Advocacy Alliance (KAA) is the nonpartisan voice for over 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.