

## OFFICERS

### President

*Robert A. Winn, MD*

VCU Massey Comprehensive Cancer Center

### Vice President/President-elect

*Joann B. Sweasy, PhD*

The Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center

### Immediate Past President

*Caryn Lerman, PhD*

USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center

### Treasurer

*David Gosky, MA, MBA*

The Ohio State University

Comprehensive Cancer Center - The James

### Executive Director

*Jennifer W. Pegher, MA, MBA*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Edward Chu, MD, MMS*

Montefiore Einstein

Comprehensive Cancer Center

*Raymond N. DuBois, MD, PhD*

Hollings Cancer Center

Medical University of South Carolina

*Bernard Mark Evers, MD, FACS*

UK Markey Cancer Center

*Steven D. Leach, MD*

Dartmouth Cancer Center

Dartmouth College

Dartmouth Health

*Kelvin Lee, MD*

Indiana University

Melvin and Bren Simon

Comprehensive Cancer Center

*Kunle Odunsi, MD, PhD*

The University of Chicago Medicine

Comprehensive Cancer Center

*Yolanda Sanchez, PhD*

University of New Mexico

Comprehensive Cancer Center

*Thomas A. Sellers, PhD, MPH*

OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

March 18, 2025

Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Hubert H. Humphrey Building

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

More than 600,000 people will die of cancer in America this year.

Representing over 100 leading academic cancer centers in the United States, the Association of American Cancer Institutes is on the front lines of the battle to cure cancer. On behalf of the 400,000 Americans who will be diagnosed with cancer this year, we are eager to partner with you and President Trump to find a cure for cancer. However, we are concerned that several budget cuts at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will make it harder to achieve this shared goal.

Biomedical research in the United States depends on well-established processes, coordinated by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in partnership with the private and public sectors. These budget cuts have created chaos at many NCI-Designated cancer centers, and cancer care is suffering as a result.

According to a recent survey commissioned by Research!America, nine out of ten Americans—regardless of political affiliation—want the president and Congress to prioritize faster progress in medical advancements<sup>[1]</sup>. However, sweeping and arbitrary cuts to funding and staff at the NIH and NCI undermine the very institutions that drive scientific progress.

Since passage of the National Cancer Act in 1971, the federal government has partnered with the scientific community on discoveries that have resulted in cutting-edge treatments—even cures—for several types of cancer, enabling people to live longer, healthier lives. In fact, advancements in cancer research have led to a 33 percent decline in cancer mortality over the past 30 years<sup>[2]</sup>.

The NIH has been described as the “crown jewel” of American biomedical research and “the envy of the globe.” But our position as the global leader in medical innovation was in jeopardy even before these budget cuts. Between 2017 and 2021, the number of oncology clinical trials in China grew by 146 percent to 2,564, while U.S. oncology clinical trials grew by less than two percent, reaching just 1,690 trials<sup>[3]</sup>.

Capping reimbursement for F&A costs at 15 percent will widen this divide, forcing cancer centers to divert resources from research to cover essential operating expenses and leaving the U.S. on the brink of a massive “brain drain”.

Recent data from United for Medical Research show that every dollar invested in NIH funding generates \$2.56 in economic activity, supporting thousands of jobs across the country<sup>[4]</sup>. Advances in prevention and early detection actually *save* money, as cancer diagnosed at later stages is two to four times more expensive to treat than the same cancer detected at an earlier stage.

In other words, these budget cuts will cost more than they will save, hurting tax-paying jobs and risking patient lives.

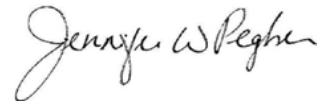
We urge you to act swiftly to ensure stable, uninterrupted funding for the NIH and NCI, and we look forward to working with you to “Make America Healthy Again.”

Thank you for your time and consideration. AACI welcomes the opportunity to discuss these concerns.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Winn, MD  
President, AACI



Jennifer W. Pegher, MA, MBA  
Executive Director, AACI

---

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.researchamerica.org/press-releases-statements/national-survey-shows-americans-want-president-and-congress-to-assign-higher-priority-to-medical-progress/>

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://acsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.3322/caac.21763>

<sup>[3]</sup> <https://itif.org/publications/2024/07/30/how-innovative-is-china-in-biotechnology/>

<sup>[4]</sup> <https://www.unitedformedicalresearch.org/annual-economic-report/>