

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Ed
2458 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Ed
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As you being work on the Fiscal Year 2017 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill, we urge you to provide robust funding for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and to include language encouraging NCI to expand its MATCH program to include recalcitrant cancers.

The overall five-year relative survival rate for all cancers is approximately 69 percent. This year alone, cancer will kill almost 600,000 Americans. This issue represents a national health crisis that deserves significant federal attention which is why we are requesting you fully fund the National Cancer Institute. This federal investment is a responsible action for our collective future, paying long-term dividends for the health and welfare of our country.

We also remain concerned that there are a group of cancers, defined in statute as recalcitrant cancers, whose five-year survival rates remains below 50 percent. Estimates are that half of cancer deaths are caused by eight site-specific cancers that meet this definition: pancreatic, liver, ovarian, myeloma, brain, stomach, esophagus and lung.

The National Cancer Institute launched The Molecular Analysis for Therapy Choice (MATCH), a potentially ground-breaking trial that analyzes patients' tumors to determine whether they contain genetic abnormalities for which a targeted drug exists and assigns treatment based on the abnormality. A goal for MATCH is for at least 25 percent of the patients enrolled in the trial to have rare cancers. Given the growing toll recalcitrant cancers take on society, and the enormous potential MATCH offers for our nation's deadliest cancers, we strongly urge the Subcommittee to include the below language in the Fiscal Year 2017 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations bill.

Given the growing toll recalcitrant cancers take on society, and the enormous potential National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Molecular Analysis for Therapy Choice (MATCH) program offers for our nation's deadliest cancers, the Committee strongly urges NCI to increase the set-aside goal for rare cancers and to broaden it to include recalcitrant cancers in the MATCH program.

With your support, we can ensure that adequate resources are available for making cancer research, early detection, and the well-being of cancer patients a national health care priority.

Sincerely,

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Dave Reichert
Member of Congress

Leonard Lance
Member of Congress

Joe Kennedy
Member of Congress