

August 8, 2022

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned organizations represent cancer patients, oncologists and other health care professionals, researchers, and caregivers. We are writing with advice related to the President's Cancer Panel.

We were pleased to see the July 13, 2022, action appointing members of the President's Cancer Panel and bringing that panel back to fulfill its important role of advising you on the development and execution of the National Cancer Program. Dr. Elizabeth M. Jaffee, Dr. Mitchel Berger, and Dr. Carol Brown are distinguished leaders in their cancer fields and will be able to bring cancer research, care, and therapy development advice to you. We also commend you for ensuring that the members of the President's Cancer Panel have focused on eliminating cancer care disparities, expertise that will be put to good use in advising you about the National Cancer Program.

Although we are enthusiastic about the appointees, we find there to be a serious omission in the Panel. For many years, the President's Cancer Panel has included as one of its members a cancer survivor. We believe that cancer survivors should be included on the Panel because they can offer experience, expertise, and perspectives that are different from those offered by health care professionals, whether clinicians, basic researchers, or physician researchers. The National Cancer Act states that the nominees to the President's Cancer Panel shall be persons "who by virtue of their training, experience, and background are exceptionally qualified to appraise the National Cancer Program." There are many cancer survivors who meet those qualifications.

The National Cancer Act also states that "[a]t least two members of the panel shall be distinguished scientists or physicians." In many recent years, that requirement of the Act has been met by having two scientists or physicians on the panel rather than three, with the third seat going to a cancer survivor.

We understand that the panel is required to meet at the call of the chair but at least twelve times a year and that the transcript of the meetings shall be made public. We know that in recent years the panel has held public meetings focused on important issues related to the National Cancer Program, and that many of those meetings have been structured to seek stakeholder input on the topics at hand. We commend this model for deliberation and seeking input, but we do not believe that it is a substitute for inclusion of a cancer survivor on the panel.

We suggest that you encourage the current President's Cancer Panel to employ formal and informal means to solicit the input of cancer survivors regarding the panel's work. That is an incomplete but

modest step toward establishing avenues for ensuring the input of cancer survivors regarding the panel's work and advice to you.

Thank you for your actions to rejuvenate the President's Cancer Panel. We look forward to steps to integrate cancer survivors into the work of the panel and to the appointment of a cancer survivor to the next panel opening.

Sincerely,

Cancer Leadership Council