



January 11, 2023

Hon. Kathy Hochul  
 New York State Capitol  
 Albany, NY 12224

**Re: Support for the New York State Cancer Services Program**

Dear Governor Hochul and State Leaders

On behalf of our organizations, we are writing to respectfully request that you dedicate \$25.6 million to the New York State Cancer Services Program (CSP) and establish a \$1 million operating budget line to support the operations of the CSP in the Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in New York State. In 2023 there will be over 118,000 new cases of cancer and over 32,000 New Yorkers will die from the disease. More specifically, an estimated 17,800 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer while 870 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer and an additional 8,950 men and women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer. Approximately 5,330 New Yorkers will die from these three cancers alone. These are not just numbers. Each one of them is someone's family member, loved one, friend. One thing that all these cancers have in common is that each of them can be detected through screening and, when caught at an early state, have a significantly higher survival rate.

The CSP was established to provide New Yorkers with free breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings, and diagnostic services. The CSP is available to individuals living in New York with limited income who either have no health insurance or are covered by a plan that applies cost-sharing for preventative or diagnostic services.

Despite its record of success, the CSP is currently able to reach only 18% of the entire eligible population in New York—a result of its limited budget and resources. This includes Black and Hispanic/Latino cancer patients—two groups which are more likely to be diagnosed at later stages than Whites for breast, colorectal and cervical cancers due, in part, to lower screening rates.

Compounding the challenges faced by the CSP, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a decline in potential lifesaving cancer screenings, resulting in increased cancer incidence and death. For instance, the decrease in colonoscopies and biopsies caused by the pandemic are projected to result in 4,500 excess deaths from colorectal cancer and an excess of 2,500 breast cancer deaths alone by 2030 nationwide according to recent National Cancer Institute (NCI) studies.

In 2017, Governor Cuomo reduced the annual CSP budget by 20%, from \$25.6 to \$19.8 million, where it has remained. State funding for the CSP has been supplemented in part each year by two grants from the federal government by way of the National Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and the National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program. In 2022 those grants were reduced by a total of more than \$1.34 million resulting in a further challenge to screening in New York.

To ensure that every New Yorker has access to breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening, we are calling on the state to recommit the 20% lost in 2017 and dedicate \$25.6 million to the CSP, expanding the availability of screening to low-income, under-, and uninsured residents. Additionally, New York State should establish a specific budget line item for operating expenses needed to implement the CSP and allocate \$1 million in Fiscal Year 2023-24. These investments should be a down payment on a larger investment as part of New York State's 2024-2029 Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan which is due to be released in 2023.

Investing in cancer prevention and early detection saves lives. By investing in the CSP, New York can reduce the number of family members, loved ones, and friends lost to cancer.

We appreciate your time and attention on this important matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Davoli at [michael.davoli@cancer.org](mailto:michael.davoli@cancer.org) and Angelica Katz at [AKatz@Komen.org](mailto:AKatz@Komen.org).

Sincerely,

African American Tobacco control Leadership Council  
American Cancer Society  
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network  
Bassett Healthcare

Brooklyn College Cancer Center, CUNY  
Christ Church UCC - Bronx Multi-Faith Advisory Group  
Colorectal Cancer Alliance  
Columbia University Herbert Irving Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
Glens Falls Hospital  
Hispanic Health Network--Logo  
Hudson Headwaters Health Network  
Island Digestive Health Center  
Long Island Community Hospital  
Medical Society of the State of New York  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center  
Montefiore Health System  
Mount Sinai Health System  
NAACP NYS Conference  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
New York Oncology Hematology  
New York State Academy of Family Physicians  
New York State Association of County Health Officials  
New York State Association For Rural Health  
New York State Public Health Association  
NewYork-Presbyterian  
Northwell Health  
NYU Langone Health  
Oswego County OB-GYN, P.C.  
Ovarian Cancer Project  
Peconic Bay Medical Center  
PE GI Solutions  
Putnam GI  
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center  
Rural Health Network  
South Brooklyn Endoscopy Center  
St. Lawrence County Health Initiative, Inc.  
Staten Island University Hospital  
Stony Brook Cancer Center  
Susan G Komen Breast Cancer Foundation  
University at Buffalo  
University of Rochester

CC: All state leaders