
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7177 of April 1, 1999

The President

Cancer Control Month, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Each year for more than half a century, our Nation has dedicated the month of April to reaffirming our commitment to developing more effective prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer and to recognizing the progress that we have made in fighting this devastating disease.

Today we are reaping the rewards of our long-standing efforts to combat cancer as researchers make remarkable progress virtually every day. Over the past several years, for example, scientists have identified genes involved in a number of cancers, including cancers of the breast, prostate, kidney, skin, and colon. In the first year of the Cancer Genome Anatomy Project at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), researchers succeeded in identifying more than 300,000 DNA sequences and 12,000 new genes—double the initial expectation. The newly created Cancer Genetics Network will help scientists answer the many clinical questions raised by these discoveries. This national network will link participating cancer research centers and strengthen their efforts not only to identify genes that predispose people to cancer, but also to learn better methods for counseling, testing, and monitoring people for cancer susceptibility. These and other recent advances are providing Americans with our most powerful weapons to defeat cancer: early detection and immediate treatment.

Recognizing the great promise such findings hold for our battle against cancer, my Administration has dedicated unprecedented Federal resources toward cancer research. The omnibus appropriations bill I signed this past October increased funding for the NCI by \$400 million. This increase—the single largest increase in funding for cancer and medical research in history—sets the NCI budget at nearly \$3 billion, enabling it to fund critical new research, including 10 new clinical trials for breast cancer treatment. Last year we saw one of the most significant advances to date in cancer prevention research with the discoveries from the landmark Breast Cancer Prevention Trial. This study, a national clinical trial sponsored by the NCI, found that the incidence of breast cancer fell by 49 percent among women taking the anti-estrogen drug tamoxifen. Based upon this finding, last October, the Food and Drug Administration approved tamoxifen for preventative use by women at risk for breast cancer.

Through the Department of Defense, we are also awarding \$60 million in grants for prostate cancer research. These grants are funding innovative new studies to determine the causes of prostate cancer, develop new methods of prevention and detection, and discover groundbreaking new treatments to save lives. In addition, we have worked to accelerate the approval process for new cancer drugs to ensure that cancer patients have access to the latest and most effective treatments, all while maintaining the highest of safety standards.

Although these and other recent advances are encouraging, we must not be complacent. The occurrence of cancer is still too common, and the suffering it causes is incalculable. As we stand on the threshold of a new millennium, let us draw strength from the successes of the past and reaffirm our determination to treat, prevent, and ultimately eradicate cancer.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148; 36 U.S.C. 150) requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April to be "Cancer Control Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim April 1999 as Cancer Control Month. I invite the Governors of the 50 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, and the appropriate officials of all other areas under the American flag to issue similar proclamations. I also ask health care professionals, private industry, community groups, insurance and managed care companies, and all other interested organizations and individuals to unite in renewing our Nation's commitment to controlling cancer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

