

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Nicole Bender
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
Phone: (202) 661-5773
Email: nicole.bender@cancer.org



National Bus Tour Rolls Across the Nation Urging Americans to Join the Fight to Defeat Cancer

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Effort Highlighting the Role of Elected Officials in the Fight Against Cancer

[Washington, DC] – The Fight Back Express is rolling across the nation, carrying the mobile message that Americans have the power to fight cancer in this country with their voices. The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is sponsoring the 6-month bus tour to highlight the crucial role elected officials play in supporting laws and policies that help people fight cancer.

The ACS CAN Fight Back Express kicked off in Ohio in early May and will travel across the 48 continental United States through Election Day, Nov. 4.

“If one person can fight cancer, then a nation can rise up and defeat it,” said Daniel E. Smith, president of ACS CAN, the sister advocacy organization of the American Cancer Society. “As an essential partner in the fight against cancer, government has a critical role to play in enacting laws and policies that help people battle a disease that will kill an estimated 565,650 people in America this year.”

Scientific discovery alone will not defeat cancer. The federal government is by far the largest source of cancer research funding, but years of budget freezes and cuts are impeding progress. Through the bus tour, ACS CAN is working to make cancer a higher national priority by educating the public, lawmakers, candidates and the media about the importance of government’s role in defeating cancer. Cancer patients, survivors, caregivers and their families gather at each stop to share their experience with the disease and to voice the need to make dramatic changes in this country’s approach to cancer.

“We can make this disease history,” said Bob Willman, an ACS CAN State Lead Ambassador Volunteer from Springfield, Ohio. “We know what we need to do to win the war on cancer. Now we need our elected officials to join us and support laws and policies that will help defeat this disease.”

The ACS CAN Fight Back Express is a mobile action center. At each bus stop visitors have the chance to share their story with their Members of Congress through the Picture A Cure program and sign a petition to support access to quality health care for all Americans. The ACS CAN Fight Back Express bus tour comes on the heels of a major public education campaign by ACS CAN and the American Cancer Society, raising awareness about the critical need for access to quality healthcare for all Americans.

There has been tremendous progress in the fight against cancer, as evidenced by the reduction in death rates from cancer every year since 1991. But continued success is at risk if Americans don't have access to cancer prevention, early detection and treatment. More than 47 million people in America are uninsured and countless millions more are underinsured, making them more likely to be diagnosed at later stages when cancers are more deadly. Too often, lifesaving cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment programs are not available to patients who need care the most.

ACS CAN supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions for a number of cancer-related issues including:

- **Prevention and Early Detection:** Regular screenings can catch cancer at its earliest, most treatable stages, but a federal program that offers low-income and uninsured women screenings for breast and cervical cancer only covers 1 in 5 eligible women. A similar program for colon cancer is now pending before Congress and needs to be created immediately as both of these programs have the potential to save lives.
- **Increased Funding for Cancer Research:** Medical research could lead to the discovery of prevention and early detection tools for the most deadly cancers such as pancreatic and ovarian cancer, but federal research funding has been frozen or cut in recent years, threatening progress.
- **Tobacco Control:** Tobacco is responsible for approximately one-third of all cancer deaths, but the federal government still lacks the ability to regulate tobacco

products. At the state and local level, strong smoke-free policies could significantly reduce the number of tobacco-related cancer cases by protecting workers and patrons from the hazards of secondhand smoke.

The Fight Back Express is made possible by the contributions of millions of American Cancer Society and ACS CAN donors across the country whose lives have been touched by cancer. Additionally, the bus tour is made possible by a generous contribution from Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA).

“Incredible progress has been made in recent years in the battle against cancer,” said PhRMA President and CEO Billy Tauzin. “America’s pharmaceutical research companies work hard every day to develop new medicines that will enable cancer patients to live longer, healthier, more productive lives. However, scientific research is but one piece of the puzzle; improved prevention, early detection and access to quality healthcare are equally critical. Together, we can win this fight.”

To find out more about the ACS CAN Fight Back Express and how to make cancer a national priority log on to www.acscan.org.

ACS CAN, the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy partner of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit www.acscan.org.

###