THE HIGH COST OF CANCER
And what we can do about it.

Financial Toxicity
Cancer patients don’t just struggle with the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. For many patients, they also struggle with the financial repercussions, an effect increasingly referred to as financial toxicity.

42%* of patients depleted their assets after 2 years
38%* of patients were financially insolvent after 4 years

*Among 9.5 million U.S. adults ages 50 years or older diagnosed with cancer (2000-2012).

Monetary Costs
Total U.S. expenditure for cancer (2014): $87.8 billion
Patient out-of-pocket cost (2014): $3.9 billion

Bankruptcy
Bankruptcy rates are 2.65 times higher in cancer survivors. Even survival can be financially ruinous.

2.65 times higher

Negative Impact on Behavior
Cancer patients make financial and behavioral adjustments after diagnosis. The forced adjustments often have a negative impact, as seen in these behaviors:

- Non-adherence to medications
- Cutting back on necessities
- Opting out of beneficial therapies
- Depletion of retirement savings
- Accumulation of credit card debt

Negative Impact on Well Being
Cancer survivors who experience higher financial toxicity also report:

- Greater levels of pain
- Greater levels of anxiety
- Higher rates of depression

How Legislators Can Help

- Create a Medicare cap for cancer treatment costs irrespective of treatment setting
- Transition to clinical pathway payment programs
- Limit non-ACA compliant short-term health plans
- Expand employer support of cancer treatment

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