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<http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org>

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Statement by Carlea Bauman, President of the Colorectal Cancer Coalition in response to President Obama's State of the Union Address

WASHINGTON, D.C. – January 25, 2011 – “As someone who is committed to winning the fight against cancer, I was pleased to hear the President talk about the importance of innovation. However, it is counterproductive to proclaim that ‘this is our generation’s Sputnik moment’ while calling for a spending freeze for domestic programs.

Forty years ago when President Nixon signed the National Cancer Act into law we didn’t understand how a normal cell becomes a cancer cell. Since 1971, we have invested millions and made great advances in biomedical research.

Over the last forty years, we’ve seen a transformation in how we treat cancer from treatments that don’t distinguish between healthy and cancerous cells to more effective, targeted therapies. Scientists working on the Cancer Genome Atlas are building a comprehensive database of the DNA changes associated with 20 major tumor types and we can look forward to the day when cancer treatments are tailored to the specific DNA changes in each patient’s tumor.

To date, the growth in knowledge about cancer biology and genetics is perhaps the greatest success of the national cancer effort since passage of the National Cancer Act.

But we have a long way to go. Cancer still remains a leading cause of death in the United States.

This year over 560,000 Americans will die from cancer – almost one every minute.

Now is not the time for across the board cuts to domestic spending. If we are going to find a cure for cancer in our lifetimes, we need a sustained investment in proven research programs – programs that encourage innovation and ensure discoveries make it from bench to bedside as quickly as possible.

Americans recognize the importance of federal support for cancer research regardless of the economic climate. Nearly nine in ten respondents (89 percent) to a national nonpartisan poll of households with a history of cancer, think it is important that the President and Congress increase funding for cancer research and related programs. The survey, commissioned by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, also found that support for federal cancer research funding is high regardless of party affiliation, with 85 percent of Republicans, 87 percent of independents, and 96 percent of Democrats polled responding favorably.

Today’s investments in cancer research are the key to addressing tomorrow’s public health and economic crises. Last year, colorectal cancer cost the US economy \$14 billion. Cancer incidence is

projected to nearly double by 2020, particularly among the baby boomer population. As these rates climb so too will the cost to our economy.

In one of his first addresses to Congress, President Obama called for, ‘a new effort to conquer a disease that has touched the life of nearly every American by seeking a cure for cancer in our time.’

On behalf of the thousands of Americans who will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year and on behalf of the millions of Americans living with colorectal cancer I urge the President and Congress to renew the fight against cancer with smart and sustained investments in biomedical research that will not only save thousands of lives but encourage innovation and help stimulate the economy by creating much-needed jobs.”

The Colorectal Cancer Coalition is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization seeking to eliminate suffering and death due to colorectal cancer. The Colorectal Cancer Coalition pushes for research to improve screening, diagnosis and treatment of colorectal cancer; advocates for policy decisions that make the most effective colorectal cancer prevention and treatment available to all; and works to increase awareness that colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable and beatable.

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