



[Memorandum In Support of HB 51 – Delegate Rosenberg]

[House Health & Government Operations Committee

February 7, 2024]

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is the nonprofit nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN empowers cancer patients, survivors, their families and other experts on the disease, amplifying their voices and public policy matters that are relevant to the cancer community at all levels of government. We mobilize our powerful grassroots network of cancer advocacy volunteers to bring awareness to lawmakers like yourself on cancer issues that matter to your constituents.

ACS CAN supports HB 51.

This year it is estimated that 36,410 Marylanders will hear the chilling phrase “you have cancer.” It’s also estimated that almost 10,310 will die from cancer.

Nationwide in 2024, an estimated 9,620 children (ages 0 to 14 years) and 5,290 adolescents (ages 15-19 years) will be diagnosed with cancer, and 1,040 children and 550 adolescents will die from the disease. Cancer is the leading disease-related cause of death among both children and adolescents. The most commonly diagnosed cancers in children and adolescents are leukemia (28% and 13%, respectively); brain, including benign and borderline malignant tumors (25% and 22%); and lymphoma (12% and 19%).

Incidence in children overall has stabilized since 2015 after increasing since at least 1975. However, rates in adolescents during this time continued to rise by 1% per year, although trends do vary by cancer type.

The cancer death rate has declined by more than half from 1970 to 2021 in both children (from 6.3 per 100,000 to 1.9) and adolescents (from 7.2 per 100,000 to 2.7), largely due to improvements in treatment and high participation in clinical trials for the most common cancers (e.g., leukemia), especially among children. However, progress lags for some cancer types, such as diffuse midline glioma, a type of brain cancer.

HB 51 would alter the use of the Maryland Pediatric Cancer Fund to require that the Fund be used only for pediatric cancer research instead of only for pediatric cancer research, prevention, and treatment.

We applaud the Senator for introducing this legislation and would point out that as defined the legislation does not preclude “research to develop and advance the understanding of pediatric cancer and the techniques and modalities effective in the prevention, cure, screening, and treatment of pediatric cancer.” ACS CAN believes that *more* resources should be brought to bear for outreach, education and treatment so that we can truly say our goal is to end cancer as we know it, for everyone.

ACS CAN thanks the Chair and committee for the opportunity to testify, and urges a favorable report of HB 51.