

The Pink Fund

Providing financial aid to women and men afflicted with breast cancer.

Advocate for Something, Don't Waste Your Cancer!

May 3, 2011 in [Uncategorized](#) | Tags: [American Cancer Society](#), [public policy](#), [quality healthcare](#), [Sisterhood of Survivors](#), [Susan G. Komen for the Cure](#)

While The Pink Fund is not an advocacy organization, we definitely believe in survivors empowering themselves and others by using their cancer journey to affect change. For me, (Molly MacDonald) The Pink Fund is my way to empower women and men to thrive through treatment by removing financial stress that often accompanies treatment, when loss of income occurs. For others, they want to use their cancer to change public policy. Whatever you decide, the important thing is to NOT WASTE YOUR CANCER.

Cancer Advocacy: Join the Movement and Share Your Story



By Jamie A. Ledezma, Staff Attorney, Cancer Legal Resource Center

More than 11 million cancer survivors are living in the United States.^[1] Each individual story of survivorship is unique and compelling as it relates to the diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Legislative advocacy is an opportunity to share your voice and tell your story or that of a family member or friend. Having the courage to share your story and engage your elected officials on an issue that impacts the lives of millions of Americans may be the most powerful thing you can do as a cancer survivor and advocate in a pursuit of helping others.

Legislative Advocacy is the process of working to achieve a legislative outcome. This involves taking action to change a current law, proposing an idea for new legislation, or expressing a view about a proposed bill. There are many ways to become involved in the legislative process, including writing a letter to your elected officials, scheduling a meeting with your legislators, joining an organization's advocacy efforts, communicating with the media to express an opinion, or calling fellow community members to action.

The simple act of sharing your story can help shape the course of public policy at the state and federal level to ensure that others who follow on this journey may have greater access to early detection and life-saving screening, diagnosis and treatments. The Cancer Legal Resource Center (CLRC) has developed a *HCP Guide* which includes a comprehensive chapter on legislative advocacy, including sample letter forms, tips on meeting with a legislator and resources for cancer-advocacy groups. The legislative advocacy chapter of the *HCP Guide* is available for download at: www.disabilityrightslegalcenter.org/about/documents/FinalHCPManualwithforms1-4-11_PartIX_LegislativeAdvocacy.pdf.

Getting involved with an organization's established legislative advocacy effort is a great way to stay informed about issues that affect cancer survivors and their caregivers.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Advocacy Alliance is a non-partisan grassroots advocacy program designed to educate elected officials about breast cancer through community involvement. Their website, www.KomenAdvocacy.org, has information about current legislation and provides opportunities to join with them in lobbying for a change.

LIVESTRONG (Lance Armstrong Foundation) has advocacy tools to stay informed, raise awareness, and advocate for legislation that expands access to cancer screenings, treatment, and survivor care. To access their advocacy materials visit www.livestrong.org, click on the Get Involved tab, then click on Advocacy.

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is another non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major public health problem through voter education and issue campaigns aimed at influencing candidates and lawmakers to support laws and policies. Their website www.ACSCAN.org has the latest information and action reports on cancer-related legislative issues in your state.

In addition to providing cancer-related legal resources and information, the CLRC advocates for access to quality care for all Americans impacted by cancer at the state and federal level. The Disability Rights Legal Center and CLRC supports legislation at the state and federal level, which helps improve the lives of people touched by cancer through increased awareness.

Jamie A. Ledezma is a staff attorney at the Cancer Legal Resource Center, a national, joint program of the Disability Rights Legal Center and Loyola Law School. The CLRC provides free information and resources on cancer-related legal issues to patients, survivors, caregivers, health care professionals, employers, and others coping with cancer. Ms. Ledezma is also an Adjunct Professor at Fresno City College, University of Phoenix and DeVry University.

As a cancer survivor, Ms. Ledezma spends much of her free time volunteering with cancer organizations and advocates to ensure all patients have access to quality healthcare. Ms. Ledezma serves as the Public Policy Chair for the California Collaborative of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, on the Board of Directors for the Central Valley Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and as a member on the Board of Directors for Sisterhood of Survivors. She also speaks regularly at various events including legislative hearings, healthcare engagements, high school and college programs and to cancer-advocacy groups.

[1] <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancerbasics/cancer-prevalence>

Like Be the first to like this post.

No comments yet

[Comments feed for this article](#)

LEAVE A REPLY

Logged in as [Cancer Legal Resource Center](#). [Log out?](#)

Comment

You may use these HTML tags and attributes: <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <blockquote cite=""> <cite> <code> <pre> <del datetime=""> <i> <q cite=""> <strike>

- Notify me of follow-up comments via email.
- Notify me of site updates

⌵