

September 22, 2009

The Honorable Richard Burr  
217 Russell  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Burr,

We are contacting you to advocate the importance of the Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act of 2009, recently introduced in both the United States Senate and House of Representatives (S.332 and H.R.2112 respectively), and ask for your support. This legislation declares lung cancer a national public health priority and establishes in law a broad comprehensive program to address the disease.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths both nationally and in every state. In 2009, an estimated 6,670 North Carolinians will be diagnosed with lung cancer and 5,630 will die from the disease. Two out of three of those diagnosed are former or never smokers.

Additionally, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in every ethnic group and disproportionately impacts African American men whose mortality rate is over 25% higher than white men. Our veterans are at a 25% higher risk of being diagnosed with lung cancer than the general public. And only 15% of those diagnosed with lung cancer will live for five years or more.

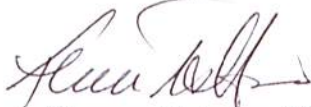
These facts demonstrate why the Lung Cancer Mortality Reduction Act is so necessary. The Act involves over a dozen federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Health and Human Services to devise a comprehensive and coordinated plan to address this lethal disease and reduce its mortality.

Researchers and clinicians here at Duke witness the devastating impact of lung cancer every day and see first hand the need for increased research funding to address this number one cancer killer. We have developed nationally recognized programs in clinical and translational research in lung cancer, focusing on the concept of utilizing the genomic signature for personalized medicine. This research program nevertheless struggles for adequate funding.

This is important legislation as it not only calls for a coordinated federal response to a public health epidemic, but gives hope to a long underserved community. We are asking that you, our senator, give your support and endorsement to the first comprehensive legislation designed to fight lung cancer.

Please feel free to contact me or any of the members of the Duke Thoracic Oncology Program for more information about our efforts at Duke to raise awareness about lung cancer and improve outcomes for the lung cancer community.


Sincerely yours,


  
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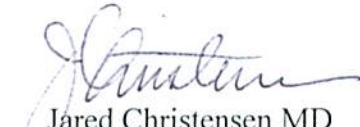
  
Kim Howard PA

  
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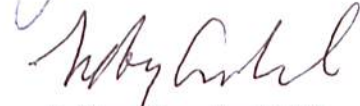
  
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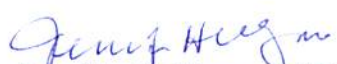
  
Thomas Sporn MD

  
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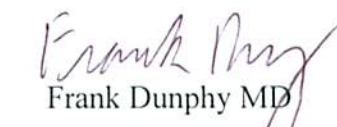
  
Nicole Larrier MD

  
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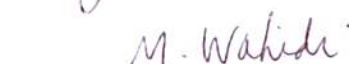
  
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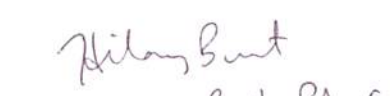
  
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