Greetings, Ohio Advocate!

Hoping you had a great Thanksgiving and are eager for pending cold and snow. December is upon us and I am learning that now more than ever we need to be diligent and stay on our toes to make sure the voices of cancer patients, survivors, and caretakers resonate with our decision-makers.

Be on the lookout for probably action in the coming weeks surrounding the anti-vaccine bill that has moved to the Senate. For more information on that and to prepare for your calls/emails please spend some time reading through the state updates very carefully.

Also, I will be sending out an invitation for our annual training which will be a tri-state training with Indiana and Michigan. Please save the date and make every effort to attend.

Lastly, I am really sad to see that only a few of you have registered for Cheers to 20 Years on December 9th. C’mon Ohio – let’s show them why we are so critical by showing up to celebrate our achievements and learn about our next chapter. I know we are all tired of virtual events but this time we are using a new platform, Remo, which is awesome! See below for more information on how to register and for recruiting two of your friends/family members/colleagues to attend. It is a party after all!

Welcome to the fight: Jodi and Abbi!

**Important Dates:**

* Thursday, December 9th (7:30pm ET): Cheers to 20 Years Event! [**Register NOW!**](https://www.fightcancer.org/actions/cheers-20-years)
* Saturday, January 29th (10am – 1pm ET): Annual Advocacy Training SAVE THE DATE!

**Action Items:**

* Sign up for Cheers to 20 Years! On December 9th and recruit two others to join the party!
* Save the date for our annual training on January 29th. It is going to be GREAT.
* Check out the Hope Lodge Wish List below and help where you can.

**Your Email is also linked** [**HERE**](https://www.fightcancer.org/ohio-volunteer-resource-page)

**In This Email:**

* State Update
* Federal Update
* Ohio ACS CAN Work Groups
* Cheers to 20 Years!
* Advocate Corner – NEW!!!

**State Update…Got questions? Email** **leo.almeida@cancer.org**

**Telehealth**

The telehealth bill (HB122) has been discussed quite a bit lately and we’re hopeful it will pass out of the committee within the next two weeks. This bill is a critical win for patients with compromised immune systems, such as cancer patients, and their caregivers. It means more patients will have access to quality treatment even if the physician is in another state. When the bill passes and moves to the Governor’s desk for signing, we will be sure to thank the sponsors of the bill and talk about how this is a win in the fight for cancer patients. Be on the lookout.

**Redistricting**

The proposed congressional maps continue to receive attention with a second lawsuit being filed this week. The latest lawsuit comes from a coalition of voter-rights groups arguing that Ohio Republicans violated the state constitution by drawing maps that benefit their own party (12 of 15 seats). This group also sued over the state legislative maps. Written arguments are scheduled with briefs due on December 13, 17, and 20. As a reminder, the proposed maps would only be in effect for four years because it did not receive bipartisan support.

**Antivaccine Bill**

We were optimistic that the anti-vaccine bills we’ve been watching since early summer were not going to be resurrected for a while. Unfortunately, Republicans passed a ban on vaccine mandates in schools and work late yesterday. In addition to eliminating vaccine mandates, HB218 broadens the vaccine exemption conditions including those with certain medical conditions, religious reasons, “natural immunity”, and reasons of conscience. ASC CAN will be expressing our disappointment over this decision as the bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

Our opposition to this mandate has been picked up by several sources as we make it known just how important it is to protect our vulnerable community members. Here are some of the notable clips:

[The Center Square, OH & 9 others: Vaccination Mandate Prohibition Passes Ohio House](https://www.thecentersquare.com/ohio/vaccination-mandate-prohibition-passes-ohio-house/article_0be50770-4951-11ec-846e-33df73094685.html)

**ACS CAN Ohio Government Relations Director Leo Almeida Interviewed**
“ACS CAN is discouraged that the House passed this legislation putting the health of those who have battled cancer and the over 73,000 Ohioans who will be diagnosed this year at greater risk,” ACS CAN Government Relations Director Leo Almeida said. “ACS CAN calls on the Senate to put a stop to this legislation and looks forward to working with them to protect those Ohioans facing cancer.”

[Ohio Capital Journal, OH & 20 others: House GOP passes vaccine mandate ban after months of effort](https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2021/11/18/house-gop-passes-vaccine-mandate-ban-after-months-of-effort/)

**ACS CAN Senior Regional Media Advocacy Manager Michelle Zimmerman Quoted**
“It cannot be overstated that cancer patients who have compromised immune systems need to be protected and feel safe when receiving cancer care and doing everyday activities,” said spokeswoman Michelle Zimmerman in a statement.

[WEWS-TV, OH: HB 218 Anti-Vaccine Mandate Legislation](https://archive.tveyes.com/18120/2890896-42727/1846dd02-4b65-494b-b87e-08fd071a8124/WEWS_11-19-2021_05.03.29.mp4)

**ACS CAN Ohio Government Relations Director Leo Almeida Interviewed**
The America Cancer Society tells us the mandate ban could raise the risk for cancer patients and others with compromised immune systems. Cancer patients have to go to doctor appointments, drugstores, different services, so legislation that doesn't do anything to encourage vaccinations is detrimental and putting our cancer patient survivors at higher risk.

Hannah, OH: After False Starts, House Adopts Vaccination Mandate Exemptions

**ACS CAN Ohio Government Relations Director Leo Almeida Interviewed**
ACS’s vaccination requirement is essential for the ACS Hope Lodge in Cleveland. The Hope Lodge provides free lodging to cancer patients and their families, which allows them access to the care they need. This access is vital for Ohioans who live in rural parts of the state far away from premier cancer treatment facilities. ACS CAN is discouraged that the House passed this legislation putting the health of those who have battled cancer and the over 73,000 Ohioans who will be diagnosed this year at greater risk.
SEE ATTACHMENT

**Federal Update…Got questions? Email** **robyn.kaltenbach@cancer.org**

**Biomarker Testing**

ACS CAN released new survey data examining some of the most common barriers providers face in performing recommended biomarker testing. The survey of 315 oncology providers found lab turnaround time was the greatest challenge to biomarker testing (41%), followed by patient concerns about out-of-pocket costs (39%) and insurance coverage of biomarker tests (37%).

The majority of providers (68%) reported that most of their patients who should be getting biomarker tests – which are often required in order to select targeted cancer therapies – were getting tested. However, 60% report that insurance coverage for such testing is a significant to moderate barrier to appropriate testing and 46% report needing to seek prior authorization from insurers often or always before testing.

Biomarker testing can be important throughout a patient’s course of treatment, with providers reporting ordering tests at the time of initial diagnosis, at recurrence or metastasis and for monitoring a drug response. 89% of providers surveyed said biomarker testing makes it easier for them to make more informed treatment recommendations and 85% agree that improving access to biomarker testing can help improve health equity.

Biomarker testing has been required or recommended for more than half the 62 cancer drugs introduced in the last five years and research continues to show that cancer patients who receive biomarker-driven targeted cancer therapy have improved outcomes. As a reminder, ACS CAN worked with Illinois legislators to pass the first-in-the-nation law expanding insurance coverage of biomarker testing, including for those covered by Medicaid, and supported similar legislation that passed in Louisiana. ACS CAN continues to work with a broad coalition of partners in other states, including Ohio, to support legislation to expand coverage of comprehensive biomarker testing.

**Tobacco Control**

Resulting from a multi-organizational lawsuit against the FDA that was filed in 2018, tobacco product manufacturers were required to submit applications to the FDA beginning in September 2020. The FDA would review the applications and determine if the product in question was to stay on the market if it would be in the best interest of public health. If the determination was that it was not in the best interest of public health, the FDA would issue a market denial order for the product. This has occurred inconsistently and several big names that occupy a large space in the market have filed lawsuits that would prevent the order from going into effect until after the lawsuit completed. ACS CAN joined several other organizations to file Amicus briefs supporting the FDA in these cases. The circuit courts have been inconsistent with their rulings and we will continue to monitor this situation.

**Work Groups…Got questions? Email** **robyn.kaltenbach@cancer.org**

It is important to me that you each feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in the work you do for ACS CAN. The thing I’ve learned along the journey I’ve had here is that I need you. The state needs you. The organization needs you. We can only accomplish our mission if you are a part of the work we do and own a piece of the pie. For this reason, I’ve narrowed down the work groups go focus on audience served and would be honored if you would sign up to belong to one of the groups.

The commitment is minimal, but the outcome is gigantic! We will work through some of the details and start the soft roll out on our Monday call so please join us!

Which group should I put your name under:

* **Recruitment & Inclusion** – internal – recruits, motivates, trains, and inspires advocates
* **Access, Issues, & Tactics** – community external – identifies connections with community partners and guides tactics and fundraising efforts
* **Campaign Planning & Strategies** – legislative external – researches and assists with campaign planning and deployment

**Cheers to 20 YEARS!**

ACS CAN is hosting an event to celebrate 20 years of your hard work and advocacy achievements at 7:30pm ET on Thursday, December 9th. This virtual celebration is an event designed for YOU to invite friends, family, colleagues, others from your network to learn about how ACS CAN impacts the cancer fight. To learn more about the event and how you can invite folks to join, be sure to dial into the All Leads call on November 2nd at 7:30pm ET.

If you successfully recruit just two new folks to attend, you will receive a commemorative piece of flair: a commemorative 20th Anniversary lapel pin! We will provide additional information and resources that will help you succeed in expanding our network, which is essential if we are going to make a difference in the fight against cancer. Once again for your convenience, you can register by clicking on the photo!

Attached you will find the images and email template for you to use to help recruit folks in your network for the event. Please let me know if you need any other tips or resources to help you succeed in recruiting your two attendees.

Here is a link to valuable resources to help you out! [ Cheers to 20 Years Materials](https://americancancer-my.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/g/personal/rachael_eerdmans_cancer_org/Eq7WzvXAxZhMgzELs6YTIHMBJr2lMQ55qh22BKwiLxDb-w?e=tjK2kf)

Thank you to the following advocates who have already registered (as of Wednesday morning):

Lorna Hill

Cindy MacLaren

Vince Marchetta

Jill McFarland

**Advocate Corner**

If you’re reading this, you really are the heart and soul of the work we do to make the lives of cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers a little bit better. As such, I wanted to create a new category for our recurring email to highlight some of the work you are doing in the fight against cancer!

This week, OH-10’s ACT Lead, Julie Turner is a real-life Fairy-Tale Princess!!! Julie participated in the Once Upon a Relay…VOICES OF HOPE 2022 Calendar, an ACS fundraiser. As we know, the fight is about storytelling and is an important tool in our arsenal to educate lawmakers how their decisions impact the lives of thousands. As such, the fairy tale project features VOICES OF HOPE volunteers across the country who are empowered cancer survivors and caregivers who share their fairy tale photo and personal story of inspiration.

You can support this important project by purchasing your very own, autographed copy of the 2022 calendar! Order yours [**TODAY**](https://secure.acsevents.org/site/TR;jsessionid=00000000.app365a?px=41060721&fr_id=101559&pg=personal&NONCE_TOKEN=5C32EC8F3C652D40632CFFE121393CDA)before they are all gone!

**Cleveland Hope Lodge**

Please visit [Cleveland Hope Lodge Amazon Charity List](https://smile.amazon.com/hz/charitylist/ls/WGNNEY8LK7OQ/ref%3Dsmi_ge_rl_rd_gw?_encoding=UTF8&ref_=smi_se_cl_rd_ge) to learn how you can support the incredible work ACS does to provide a safe space for cancer patients and their families to live while receiving treatment far from their homes. I’ve also attached the Hope Lodge Wish List. If you can donate or know someone who can, please consider doing so this holiday season.