

MEMO



Senate of Pennsylvania

October 3, 2011

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TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf *Stewart*

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship – Lung Cancer Awareness Month

I plan to offer a resolution designating November 2011 as “Lung Cancer Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania to promote greater public awareness, enhance education, erase the stigma and increase early diagnosis of this disease in order to reduce health costs and to save lives in this Commonwealth.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in this nation and this Commonwealth and it will be responsible for more American deaths in 2011 than breast, prostate, colon, liver and kidney cancers combined. There are an estimated 606,000 new cases of lung cancer and 430 deaths from lung cancer each day in this nation, resulting in approximately 157,000 deaths annually, nearly 129,000 of which were caused by smoking.

There will be an estimated 10,900 new cases of lung cancer and 7,960 deaths from lung cancer this year in this Commonwealth. Smoking is the number one cause of lung cancer, contributing to 80% and 90% of lung cancer deaths in women and men, respectively. Other causes of lung cancer include exposure to cancer-causing substances or carcinogens, such as asbestos, radon, uranium, arsenic and certain petroleum products.

Symptoms of lung cancer include chronic cough, hoarseness, coughing up blood, weight loss and loss of appetite, shortness of breath, fever without a known reason, wheezing, repeated bouts of bronchitis or pneumonia and chest pain. In the early stages of lung cancer, these symptoms are usually absent, although when the symptoms occur, the cancer is most often advanced. There is currently no standard or cost-effective screening procedure for lung cancer. Funding for lung cancer medical research falls far short of that for diseases with lesser fatality rates.

To help educate residents of this Commonwealth, the American Lung Association in Pennsylvania supports the month of November 2011 as "Lung Cancer Awareness Month." It is fitting and proper for this Commonwealth to join this nation in designating the month of November 2011 as "Lung Cancer Awareness Month" so that through better education, more cases of lung cancer may be found in the early stages when the chance of long-term survival is enhanced.

If you are interested in cosponsoring this resolution, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at psnively@pasen.gov.