



Association of American Cancer Institutes

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### **AACI Thanks President Obama for Signing the 21st Century Cures Legislation**

The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) thanks President Barack Obama for signing the 21st Century Cures Act into law today. The legislation includes a NIH Innovation Account, which provides nearly \$4.8 billion in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) over the next ten years. The account includes \$1.8 billion in supplemental funding over seven years, beginning in Fiscal Year 2017 for cancer research, and specifically for the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative.

In his final State of the Union Address in January, President Obama called for a "cancer moonshot" to accelerate the pace of cancer treatment discoveries and cures. He put Vice President Joe Biden in charge of the initiative. Last week, the Senate renamed the cancer funding section in the Cures bill the "Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot and NIH Innovation Projects", in honor of the vice president's son, who died of cancer in 2015.

Applauding the president's signing of the groundbreaking legislation, AACI President Stan Gerson, MD, noted that "stable, predictable funding for the NIH and NCI allows AACI's 96 cancer center members to improve the delivery of care for patients while also promoting further progress and discoveries within our institutions. We are grateful to President Obama, Vice President Biden, Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray, and Representatives Fred Upton and Diana DeGette, for their unwavering support for 21st Century Cures. AACI and its members appreciate their bipartisan work, and also acknowledge the over 400 members of Congress in the House and Senate who supported Cures."

On December 10 the president signed a continuing resolution (CR) that would authorize funding for most federal agencies, including the NIH and NCI, until April 28, 2017. Last week, both the House and Senate approved the CR, narrowly averting a government shutdown on Dec. 9. The CR authorizes the NIH to access the full \$352 million in funding available in FY 2017 through the Innovation Account.

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*Dr. Gerson is the Asa and Patricia Shiverick- Jane Shiverick (Tripp) Professor of Hematological Oncology, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI)- Designated Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, in Cleveland, OH, founding director of the National Center for Regenerative Medicine, and Distinguished University Professor at Case Western Reserve University. He is also director of University Hospitals Seidman Cancer Center in Cleveland and a member of the NCI Board of Scientific Advisors.*

*The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) comprises 96 premier academic and freestanding cancer research centers in the U.S. and Canada. AACI is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer by enhancing the impact of the leading academic cancer centers.*