

February 12, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

This time of year, the colorectal cancer community begins to prepare for the month of March, a time when we come together to shed light on the devastating impact of this disease. It is an opportunity for physicians to speak to their patients about colorectal cancer, for people to get screened, and for the colorectal cancer community to come together and be heard.

In 2021, we hope you will join us in this effort and continue the tradition of recognizing March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. In light of the challenges posed by COVID-19, awareness around colorectal cancer screening has become more important than ever. By mid-April 2020, the total number of colonoscopies and biopsies performed declined nearly 90% compared to the same period the previous year. The National Cancer Institute has estimated that this could lead to 4,500 additional deaths from colorectal cancer.

March was officially designated National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month by the House, Senate and White House in 1999 after extensive advocacy by the colorectal cancer community. Since that time, awareness efforts have grown tremendously with the month of March as we as a community work towards our goal of reaching 80% colorectal cancer screening rates nationally.

In 2021, it is estimated that over 150,000 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in the US, and roughly 53,000 people will die from this disease, according to a report compiled by the American Cancer Society. This doesn't have to be our reality. If colorectal cancer is detected early through screening, it can be effectively treated through surgery and/or chemotherapy and radiation or even prevented completely.

While we've made great strides on increasing access to screening, there are still far too many people who are not getting the necessary screening. Help us increase screening rates and save lives.

The undersigned organizations represent thousands of colorectal cancer patients, survivors, and advocates. We will continue to fight and we urge you to join us. Please continue to recognize March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in 2021.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

AliveAndKickn
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American College of Gastroenterology
American Gastroenterological Association
Colon Cancer Coalition

Colon Cancer Foundation
Colon Cancer Prevention Project
Colorectal Cancer Alliance
CRC Change
Fight Colorectal Cancer
GI Cancers Alliance
Global Colon Cancer Association
Hitting Cancer Below the Belt
Kiel Colon Cancer Foundation
Prevent Cancer Foundation
The Blue Hat Foundation
The Colon Club
The Gloria Borges WunderGlo Foundation
The Raymond Foundation
Washington Colon Cancer Stars

Enclosure:

Draft Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Proclamation
Sources

COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States among men and women combined, but there is currently no cure;

WHEREAS colorectal cancer is one of the few cancers that can be prevented with timely screening and due to COVID-19, the total number of colonoscopies and biopsies performed declined nearly 90% by mid-April 2020 compared to the same period the previous year;

WHEREAS individuals born in the 1990s have double the risk of colon cancer and quadruple the risk of rectal cancer as those born in the 1950s;

WHEREAS it is estimated that over 150,000 people will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and roughly 53,000 people will die of colorectal cancer in 2021;

WHEREAS colorectal cancer incidence and mortality rates are disproportionately higher among racial and ethnic minorities;

WHEREAS the national goal established by the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable is to strive to increase timely colorectal cancer screening rates to 80 percent in every community for all Americans eligible for screening;

WHEREAS it is critical that all people, of all ages, know the signs and symptoms of the disease; and

WHEREAS observing a Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month during the month of March would provide a special opportunity to offer education on the importance of early detection and screening.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED OF AMERICA, do hereby proclaim March 2021 as: COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.

Sources:

American Cancer Society (2020). *Colorectal Cancer Facts and Figures 2020-2022*. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures-2020-2022.pdf>

American Cancer Society (n.d.). *Colorectal Cancer Facts and Figures*. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>

American Cancer Society (2020). *Cancer Facts and Figures 2020*. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2020/cancer-facts-and-figures-2020.pdf>

National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (n.d.). *Front Page - National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable*. <https://nccrt.org/>

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Komodo Health & Fight Colorectal Cancer (2020). *New Colorectal Cancer Diagnoses Fall By One-Third as Colonoscopy Screenings and Biopsies Grind to a Halt During Height of COVID-19*. https://fightcolorectalcancer.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID19-Impact-on-CRC-Patients_Research-Brief_Komodo-Health-Fight-CRC.pdf