

Local survivor travels to D.C. to urge Congress to prioritize cancer

Written by Staff Reports

Friday, 09 September 2016 01:45



Next week, more than 700 cancer patients, survivors, volunteers, and staff from all 50 states and nearly every congressional district will unite in Washington, D.C. as part of the annual American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Leadership Summit and Lobby Day.

On Sept. 13, advocates will ask Congress to take specific steps to make cancer a national priority and help end a disease that still kills 1,600 people a day in this country, and Joyce Graves, a cancer survivor from Gallup, will be on the Hill with her fellow ACS CAN volunteers.

She joins hundreds of volunteers representing every state to ask lawmakers to increase cancer research funding, improve patient quality of life, and make colorectal cancer screenings more affordable for seniors.

A two-time breast cancer survivor and retired elementary school teacher, Graves often describes herself as “not a political person.” However, she and her husband Paul, also a cancer survivor, stay active with ACS CAN as they meet with state and federal elected leaders to discuss cancer-fighting policies.

Graves will meet with her representatives on Capitol Hill to discuss the need to support an increase in federal funding cancer research. She will also ask them to co-sponsor legislation that supports patients’ quality of life and to support legislation that would close a loophole in Medicare that often results in surprise costs for seniors when a polyp is found during a routine colonoscopy.

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“One in two men and one in three women will hear the words ‘you have cancer’ in their lifetime. We need a full and unwavering commitment from Congress to take action to help prevent and treat cancer,” Graves said. “We want our lawmakers to know that volunteers from New Mexico, and from every state across the country, are counting on them to take a stand.”

ACS CAN is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. It supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage elected officials and candidates to make cancer a top national priority. It gives ordinary people the power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard. For more information, visit acscan.org.