

# Momentum

C3: COLORECTAL CANCER COALITION

News from C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition

Volume 2, Issue 2

Winter 2007

## C3 Asks: Will the New Congress Take Colorectal Cancer Seriously? *By Jim Wetekam*

The information contained in this article was accurate as of press time. Situations in Congress change frequently, so check [www.FightColorectalCancer.org](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org) for updated information.

**THE 110TH CONGRESS CAME TO WASHINGTON, DC ON JANUARY 3 AND 4 TO BE SWORN IN AND BEGIN ITS WORK.** Unfortunately, the 109th Congress left town in December without making decisions on nine of eleven Appropriations bills—only defense and homeland security were completed. The Labor-HHS Appropriation bill for fiscal year 2007 was not passed, and this bill contains nearly all funding related to colorectal and other cancer programs.

In its final moments, the 109th Congress enacted a “continuing resolution” to keep money available to the government agencies covered by the nine unfinished Appropriation bills until February 15, 2007. The incoming Democratic chairs of the Appropriations Committees have said that they will continue

in billions	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>What Congress Provided to NCI</b>	<b>\$4.825</b>	<b>\$4.793</b>	<b>\$4.799*</b>	<b>???</b>

**“[National Cancer Institute Director] Dr. Niederhuber pointed out that, because of the higher inflation index for biomedical research, flat budgets represent an actual 3 to 5.5 percent decrease (about \$150M) in the operating budgets...”**

Source: National Cancer Advisory Board, September 6, 2006 meeting minutes

\* Tentative, not yet complete. This number represents the higher Senate funding level.

this funding scheme until September 30, 2007 (the end of the federal fiscal year). However, they also said that a few changes in 2007 funding levels may still be made—before the Congress turns its attention to enacting appropriation bills for fiscal year 2008. In other words, funding for the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will be the same in 2007 as in 2006. **Due to inflation, this means that funding for cancer research is effectively decreasing.**

**C3 is taking action.** We are working with partners through One Voice Against Cancer to make sure that cancer programs are sufficiently funded both this year and next. So we are intensely following the work that Congress must complete from last year—and will be tireless in letting the new Congress know what is required for colorectal cancer patients and families.

### 2008 Budget to Be Unveiled

Congressional action on 2008 funding levels starts when the President submits his budget proposal during the first week of February. At that point, the budget committees of both the House and Senate will go to work, and the appropriations committees will begin preparing for their annual responsibility of carving up the federal budget pie.

The appropriations process is how Congress decides the amount of money to be spent by each government agency and is critically important to cancer research and prevention.

November’s election results altered the Congressional landscape. Both houses of Congress are now in the control of the Democrats. The leadership and membership of all House and Senate committees have switched. In each case, the Democrats now hold majorities, though this remains very slim in the Senate. It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty as to how things will ultimately play out, since political factors in Washington constantly change and both parties are positioning themselves already for the 2008 presidential and congressional elections.

Nevertheless, there have been a few early clues about how Congress might handle what we most care about—ensuring funding and policies that will greatly improve detection, access to care, and treatment for colorectal cancer.

### Ch-ch-changes

The Senate Appropriations Committee chairmanship shifts from Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS) to Sen. Robert Byrd (D-WV). Senator Byrd has been a consistent champion for cancer programs in his long tenure on the Appropriations Committee, so we expect this

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## New Year's Resolutions to GAIN Impact!



CARLEA BAUMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AH, JANUARY, a time when the country takes a collective look at itself and resolves to join a gym.

At C3—where we are thrilled to be entering our third year of existence—we are making our own New Year's resolutions. But while the rest of the country may falter in their resolutions by March, C3 will just be kicking into high gear.

Our New Year's resolutions have little to do with losing holiday weight or dropping bad habits. Ours are focused on you—colorectal cancer survivors, caregivers and medical professionals. We've resolved to get bigger and louder and ramp up the fight against a disease that will needlessly kill over 55,000 Americans by the end of the year.

Come December, we'll reflect on our progress and tell you how we did in sticking with our resolutions. Of course, we'll also update you here in *Momentum* and constantly on our website at [www.FightColorectalCancer.org](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org).

### Resolution #1: Increase our army of Research Advocates

Patients can and should have a seat at the research table. Our GI Research Advocate

Program will recruit and train patients on how to be the eyes and ears and unrelenting champions for cutting-edge colorectal cancer research.


### Resolution #2: Become the voice of people touched by colorectal cancer on Capitol Hill

Our March Call-On Congress (see below) will be just the start. Make sure you are signed up as a One Minute Advocate at [www.FightColorectalCancer.org](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org) so you don't miss out.

### Resolution #3: Become the leading resource for unbiased, trustworthy information on colorectal cancer treatment and research

Too few straightforward and easy-to-understand resources exist for patients on treatment options and new research findings. Be on the lookout for a newly redesigned [www.FightColorectalCancer.org](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org) to be unveiled this spring.

We can't do this without the passion, commitment and support of you, our volunteers and advocates. So as we look forward with excitement and expectation, we also look out across the country with gratitude for what you are building with us. ♦



**CALL-ON CONGRESS** March 20, 2007

Get ready to make an even bigger difference! This year, C3 will hold its **Call-On Congress Day** on Tuesday, March 20 in Washington, DC. This will follow immediately on the heels of C3's **second Advocacy Training, which will be held March 18-19 at the Courtyard Marriott in Crystal City, Virginia** (just across the river from Washington).

We plan to have 40 people on Capitol Hill on March 20—and we'll be providing information for everyone else in our grassroots network

to be on their phones that day to Call-On Congress! If you'd like to apply to be one of the people who comes in person to Washington for the advocacy training and the Call-On Congress Day, please go to our website at [www.FightColorectalCancer.org/calloncongress](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org/calloncongress).

Many more details to come, as we prepare for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in March! ♦



## DUSTY'S RECIPE FOR ACTION

With the start of the 110th Congress, you may now have a new Senator and/or Representative on their way to Washington. Whether you are an experienced advocate or a first-timer and whether your Members of Congress are new or not, now is a good time to introduce yourself to those folks and their staff. Here are some easy suggestions:

- ✓ Go to [www.FightColorectalCancer.org/advocacy/oneminuteadvocate](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org/advocacy/oneminuteadvocate) and enter your zip code to find your Members' biographical information, including their websites and committee memberships.
- ✓ Do an internet search using the Members' names to find news articles. These will give you information of what particularly interests or concerns your Senators and Representative.
- ✓ Send a letter of introduction to them saying you are affected by cancer, are part of the organization C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition, and want them to make cancer a legislative and funding priority.
- ✓ Plan now to attend any public appearances the Members make in your area. Introduce yourself (and to any staff present). Explain your concern briefly and leave contact information.

It takes effort to sprout and grow this relationship but, with time, you — and others concerned about colorectal cancer — will reap the reward. ✦

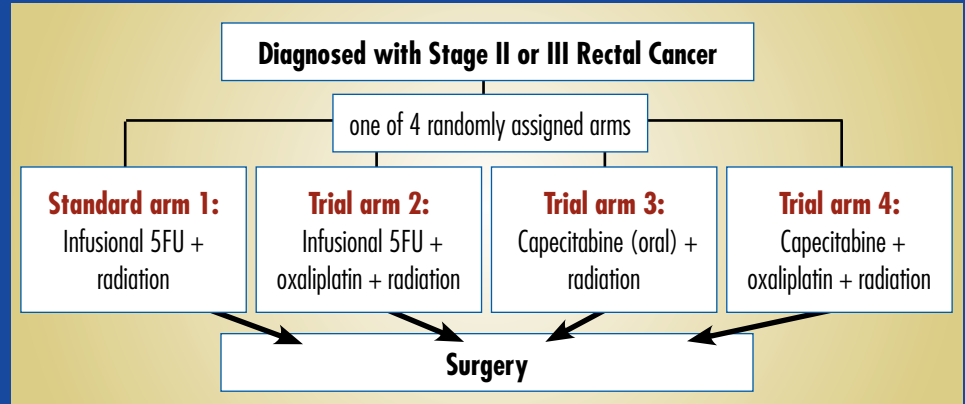
## CLINICAL TRIAL SPOTLIGHT! NEWLY DIAGNOSED STAGE II OR III RECTAL CANCER PATIENT? CHECK OUT NSABP R-04

Patients with rectal cancer are often treated with a combination of infusional 5FU (chemotherapy) and pelvic radiation before having surgery to remove the tumor. This pre-treatment can shrink tumors and reduce the risk that the cancer will return in the remaining rectum or pelvic region (local recurrence).

The R-04 clinical trial compares four combinations of chemotherapy combined with radiation therapy, to determine relative patient benefit. R-04 is studying whether these four combinations show a difference in:

- » The percentage of patients whose tumors are eliminated completely before surgery, both visually and microscopically (complete response)
- » What proportion of patients can be spared a colostomy
- » Side effects, quality of life, and convenience of care

Eligible patients must have rectal cancer that has not spread to other places in the body (stages II and III).



More information is available at [www.FightColorectalCancer.org/news](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org/news) where you can search for R-04. To find out if you are eligible, call 1-800-422-6237 (1-800-4-CANCER). R-04 is a NCI publicly-funded trial offered through the National Surgical Breast and Bowel Project and the Radiation Treatment Oncology Group. ✦

Content reviewed by Neal Merapol, M.D.

## The New Congress *Continued from page 1*

to continue. In the all-important Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee, which performs most of the detail work on cancer funding, the chairmanship will move from Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) to Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA). Both have been huge supporters of cancer and health-related funding and have worked together through the years to make cancer a priority for their colleagues. We expect that the good working relationship between the two Senators and their committee staff members will continue.

In the House of Representatives, Rep. David Obey (D-WI) takes over the committee chairmanship from Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-CA). Congressman Obey has long pushed spending for many of the nation's important domestic programs.

At the subcommittee level as well, Chairman Obey replaces Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH). A number of other senior Democrats on the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee

have also championed cancer and biomedical research, and this could potentially benefit cancer patients, families and advocates.

With tight federal budgets and numerous entities fighting over scarce resources, major obstacles remain for colorectal cancer advocates. However, with your help, we will educate all Members of Congress on the importance of cancer funding this year to secure the dollars that are needed. Throughout 2007, C3 will stay in touch with you so that you can take action to improve research and care for families who are dealing with colorectal cancer.

**It's time to get started! And two months from now, be sure to call in to Congress on March 20 (during Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month) or even join us in Washington for our advocacy day.**

**Together, you and C3 are making a big difference!** ✦

*Looking for a clinical trial or the latest research news? Go to:*

**[FightColorectalCancer.org](http://FightColorectalCancer.org)**

Use the C3 interactive interview to find clinical trials that meet your individual needs and get telephone assistance in choosing and enrolling in a trial.

Stay up-to-date with what's happening in the colorectal cancer field: media reports, new clinical trials, current research results, conferences and other events, and advocacy action opportunities.



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[info@FightColorectalCancer.org](mailto:info@FightColorectalCancer.org)  
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## News & Notes

**It's not too late to get your Colondar!** The 2007 Colondar is a project by The Colon Club featuring 25 models who are all survivors of colorectal cancer under the age of 50. Lisa Dubow, an active C3 advocate and stage IV survivor, is a model on the March page. In Lisa's honor, all proceeds from the sale of the calendar purchased through C3 will go directly to fund research into treatment of late stage disease (the Lisa Fund). **You can buy calendars for \$15 each (including tax and shipping) or for a minimum \$50 donation we'll send you a Lisa-autographed one. Get yours at [www.FightColorectalCancer.org/LisaFund](http://www.FightColorectalCancer.org/LisaFund).**



The Spring issue of **Women & Cancer** magazine will be focused on colorectal cancer and will feature the work that C3 is doing to make a difference in the fight against the disease. *Momentum* readers can receive a complimentary one-year

subscription beginning with the Summer issue by visiting [womenandcancermag.com/subscriptions/individuals.aspx](http://womenandcancermag.com/subscriptions/individuals.aspx). *Women & Cancer* is sold in many fine bookstores.

Send us an email at [info@FightColorectalCancer.org](mailto:info@FightColorectalCancer.org) and we'll send you a free copy of the Spring issue, while supplies last.



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