Jon, thank you for that over-the-top introduction.

It’s nice to be here in Fotiland.

I have known and been a colleague and advocate with Marge Foti for a long, long time.

You are blessed in the AACR with a Level V leader. And she has once again proven that by getting on staff Jon Retzlaff and all the talent and drive that he brings to his job as head of your Washington advocacy office.

I am grateful you have invited me today, and honored to speak with you about federal funding and support for cancer and medical research.
At the outset, I should tell you where I’m coming from

My father contracted polio as an infant and walked his entire life with a brace on his leg.
The Salk vaccine became available when I was 15 years old.

Now you understand why I believe so passionately in medical research.

Secondly, I’m not a scientist

MIT, before lawyer like my father
Learned appreciation for science and the scientific method.

Third, I’m a moderate Republican

I should be in a museum

Lastly, my wife led the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health for eight years
She retired from that position a year ago and now leads the National Osteoporosis Foundation as its CEO and Executive Director.

So, our entire family is dedicated to human health and medical research.

Jon has described for us the political situation in Washington. It’s the toughest it’s been in years, maybe ever. 1995 was certainly tough. But the economy was fairly strong and the national debt and deficits not so large. Now the economy is weak, the deficits large, and the debt, huge.
But with a work and determination, we came through then, and with your leadership and that of others like you, we’ll come through now. Great Marine saying: when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

If there was ever a time to be stronger for what you believe in and more passionate in your advocacy, it’s right now.

Not only do we have a tough economic and budgetary environment, we have a recent history of stagnation in federal support for research. After 9/11, the Bush budgets pretty much froze funding, for all medical research as adjusted for inflation.
Money then was spent on national security that we had to afford

But also on wars we didn’t and couldn’t

But not only was federal funding for research frozen, everything that was not defense, national security, or veterans was also frozen

So we are competing today for scarce dollars for our priorities against thousands of others working the Hill and the public for their priorities

That makes our work for cancer and medical research even more difficult and more imperative.

You will find, if you haven’t already, lots of Members of Congress, who have no idea how NIH money is spent
Who don’t know what peer-review is
Who have never been inside a research laboratory
Who don’t understand the relationship between federal funding for basic science research and the products and processes resulting from it and from the applied research of American industry
Unfortunately, I’m not talking about just the newly elected Members of the 112th Congress
When I became the chairman of the subcommittee in 1995, a Republican leader who will remain nameless, asked me what we needed NIH for, since all of the research was already being done in research institutions throughout the country
So we have not only **advocacy** work to do, but also **education**.

Now, let’s talk about the **best messages** to bring to bear in this environment for medical research. But let’s start by understanding something.

It’s the job of appropriators, and ultimately of the entire Congress, to **choose priorities** for our country and to invest money in them.

Remember, money **will be spent**. The question is “On What?” That’s what we want to influence.

The first and best message in the current environment is an economic one.
I believe that America’s economic destiny is science, technology, innovation, and research.

Here we lead the world and have since World War II.

Here is a tremendous engine of economic growth, providing high-tech, high paying jobs.

But here is where we also have new and well-funded competition.

China and India come to mind.

If we can’t lead here, where can we compete in this global economy?

It’s only by staying ahead and becoming better educated and more innovative than other societies that we can hope to compete and grow.
As part of the economic message, tell them how much their state or district receives in research funding from the NIH appropriation. The data is readily available and it always gets their attention.

So, be prepared to tell them:

- How many jobs will be created for each $1 million of NIH funding.
- How many more will be spun off?
- What will happen if we fail to make the investments needed to sustain our global leadership?

The data is available. Tell them that it’s here in science research and science, engineering, math, and technology education where we must invest... **Must!**
The human health message is a compelling one

Every family is touched by disease.

The bottom line for elected officials isn’t the good of the “research enterprise”, that is, you and your institutions, it’s healthier, happier, longer-lived Americans, their constituents, the people they are privileged to represent.

Every person, even hard-headed Congresspeople, understand, as Paul Rogers used to say, “Without research, there is no hope.”

The best way to depict medical research progress is in anecdotal terms.

Use: Then, Now, Imagine
What was the situation twenty-five or thirty years ago in respect to cancer?
What is the situation now?
Imagine how it could be ten or fifteen years from now, if we make the essential investments.
Finally, scientific opportunities have never been greater, and we must make the investments to take advantage of them.
At the same time we must show young Americans this is where personal opportunity lies as well.
After this recession, maybe our kids won’t all want to be investment bankers or hedge fund managers. Maybe some will want to become scientists or even patient activists.
So those are the messages that, I believe, will resonate most strongly when you meet with the Member or their staff.

But beyond visiting with them in Washington or at home and making these points with passion, what else should we do?

By we, I mean you and I.

Yes, not the person sitting next to you, I mean “you”.

Particularly, I want to talk with the cancer research scientists.

You are the most respected people in America.

Poll after poll shows that for years and years.

But it means nothing if you don’t use it to influence public policy!
There’s a great deal you can do at home
Research America: Your Congress/Your Health...Your Candidates/Your Health
Call your Members or Senators office
You’re entitled to know where they stand
Write an op-ed piece, talk to your local service clubs,
take a science reporter to lunch,
Go in to see your paper’s editorial board
If you’re a patient activist, take a local research scientist with you
Go to a local school, talk to the class about the importance of medical research
Teachers are not necessarily informed
The kids have to be and have to be inspired
Only you can inspire them.
After this recession, maybe our kids won’t all want to be investment bankers or hedge fund managers.
Maybe some will want to be scientists or patient activists.

Next year is an election year…. **Opportunity**!

We want to elect people to come to Washington to solve the **country’s** problems
Not to serve their **party**
Remember, too, that in many districts, the primary election is often, the election
Where it is, you have to impact the primary

So, **get involved** in the electoral process
- Go to the candidates debates
  Ask a question about their position on cancer research
You’ll get an idea about the candidates’ knowledge and interest

Choose a candidate you like

Federal or state, maybe governor or state representative

Why state level candidates?

Call their campaign office and volunteer to advise them on health matters

Guarantee, welcomed with open arms

Because a refusing candidate is a losing candidate

Tell them you’ll form a science advisory committee for him or her

Chair it yourself and, recruit others with your interest in health and medical research
Get inside the campaign and get research into your candidate’s thinking
If your candidate wins, advise your now new **officeholder** on such matters
Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every campaign for every office had an advisory committee focused on the importance of federal funding for medical research?
It **can. You** can help make it happen.
Horrors! Run for office yourself!
Why let **intellectually challenged** people like me run the country?
China, last I heard, had 8 of its top 9 leaders scientific backgrounds
We have 3-4% of both houses of Congress with **any** scientific background
Even if you don’t win when you run
it’s a real opportunity to get your viewpoint
before the electorate

Jon Retzlaff and AACR knows all of this.
  Work with him.
All of us in the advocacy community share the same
goal.
  To advance human health through medical
  research.
But, as Tip O’Neill advised us, all politics is local.
Your Washington people alone can only do so much
  But they don’t vote for your senators or
  representatives
You do, and they know it.
Some people think their elected representatives don’t listen.

They’re wrong. They do. They must or they’ll be gone. Witness the last two elections.

But you have to communicate with them.

Finally, let me close by lobbying you on the most important effort that all of us can make to help NIH and all of our science and health agencies to pave the way for new and strong investments in science, technology, innovation, and research now and in the future.

What is that one thing?

In my judgment, it is urging the leaders and Members of Congress, the President and every member of his Administration to step up and have the courage to put everything on the table and work together to solve our deficit and debt problem
That problem is what is putting **mindless pressure** on cutting spending in the very areas where we must be investing….Innovation and technology, science and research.

Here is where, if we lose our global leadership, our children and grandchildren will pay the price.

The “everything” that must be put on the table includes Medicare, Social Security, Defense spending, and our non-sensical tax system.

We must **broaden** the tax base and **lower** the rate and eliminate all those provisions that creep into law.

Until we get our hands around the deficit and debt problem, the **pressure** on all non-defense discretionary spending, which includes cancer research, will build unabated.
This is so even though cuts in this area, even at 100% would not come close to solving our larger and long-term fiscal nightmare.

So, let’s tell our elected officials: This is the time to stop kicking the can down the road, stop playing the political cards, and stop putting your party and yourself ahead of your country.

This is the time to do what you were elected to do: govern.

I believe the American people are ready.

Yes, people are reluctant to offer their priorities if they are not certain others are willing to offer theirs. The polls reflect this.

But Americans realize that the irresponsibility game is up.

The fiscal child abuse must end.

Politicians are thinking they will be punished in the next election if they do this.

Tell them they will be punished if they don’t.
We know that the crisis of living beyond our means is upon us. 

But we must view it as an opportunity to put medical 
and science research, innovation, and 
technology at the **pinnacle** of our **national** 
**priorities**

To do that, you have to **step up** and **get involved**

You have to help this country find its way forward

A great deal is at stake for all of us

**Now** is the time!


Thanks for listening to me