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Gov. Scott Signs Legislation Investing in Cancer Research

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott announced he has signed House Bill 5203, which establishes the Florida Consortium of National Cancer Institute Centers Program at the Department of Health. The Consortium is designed to enhance the quality and competitiveness of cancer care and research in this state. The Consortium will annually allocate \$60 million dollars to help Florida's Cancer Centers meet the rigorous scientific and research criteria required for the NCI designation. The Consortium will allocate these funds through a competitive formula factoring in metrics for cancer care, research, and training. An additional investment of \$20 million for peer-reviewed research grant funding was included in the It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget.

Governor Rick Scott said, "Our budget invested \$80 million in cancer research and with this legislation, we're ensuring we're doing everything possible to put these dollars where they can provide the best benefits for Florida families. Florida's cancer centers provide patients with advanced treatment and support to beat this terrible disease. This legislation will better equip our cancer centers with the tools they need to expand cancer research and care for patients and their loved ones. We remain committed to making Florida the best in the nation for research and to providing all families with access to world class treatment."

NCI-designated Cancer Centers provide the latest in medical discoveries to patients, serve the educational needs of health professionals and promote health equity throughout communities.

This funding will further enhance Florida's robust system for cancer research and collaboration which already includes projects funded by the peer-reviewed William G. "Bill" Bankhead, Jr. and David Coley Cancer Research Program, and the James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program, both of which were established by the Florida Legislature.

Senator Garrett Richter, President Pro Tempore, said, "Every family in Florida has been affected by cancer in one way or another. It is an honor to work together with the governor to pass legislation that will implement necessary funding and resources to find a cure for this disease."

Senator Andy Gardiner, President-Designate, said, “This legislation will go a long way in putting Florida on the cutting edge of cancer research. I applaud Governor Scott for leading this initiative to develop research, improve care, and eventually discover a cure.”

Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto said, “As a mom, I understand that all anyone wants when they are sick is to be close to home. This new statewide network of cancer research centers will give Floridians better access to treatments closer to their communities. Working with the Governor, we're providing access to cutting edge care, research and training that will benefit families across the state.”

Senator John Thrasher said, “I am proud to join the governor today in supporting this legislation. With these opportunities to expand cancer research, Florida’s cancer centers will continue to develop the best methods to treat and cure their patients.”

Senator Joe Negron said, “We all can name a friend or loved one who has been diagnosed with this disease. Together, we will work with the governor and with Florida’s cancer research centers to continue investing in the resources that will help develop a cure.”

Senator Jack Latvala said, “I am thankful to Governor Scott for his leadership ensuring our citizens have access to world-class cancer care. This legislation will provide Florida’s already first-rate cancer centers with even more resources to improve treatments and discover cures.”

Senator Aaron Bean said, “I stand with Governor Scott in his fight against cancer. This is a terrible disease that affects families all across the state. This legislation will work to bring better care and the latest methods to Florida families.”

Senator Denise Grimsley said, “Many Floridians and their families have awaited legislation that will help meet their needs as they work through treatment. The Governor’s dedication to investing in improvements for our cancer centers will make a great difference in many lives.”

Senator Rene Garcia said, “This investment is great news for Florida families. The Florida Consortium of National Cancer Institute Centers Program will be able to help families all across the state battle this terrible disease. I thank Governor Scott for his commitment to helping Florida families, and I am proud to support this legislation.”

Senator Anitere Flores said, “An investment in cancer research is an investment in saving lives. By signing this legislation to create the Florida Consortium of National Cancer Institute Centers Program, Governor Scott is leading our state down the right path to defeat this terrible disease.”

Representative Matt Hudson, House bill sponsor, said, “This legislation sets Florida on a path to leading the nation in the fight against cancer for children, adults and families. I commend Governor Scott’s dedication to meeting the needs of families across the state that are affected by cancer and am proud to have been the sponsor of this great piece of legislation.”

Representative Marti Coley, Speaker Pro Tempore, said, “Through collaboration between Florida’s cancer centers and our state, we will be able to provide the

necessary tools to develop better treatments and find potential cures for this dreaded disease. I am honored to have worked with the governor and my fellow members of the legislature to pass this legislation.”

Representative Steve Crisafulli, Speaker-Designate, said, “I applaud Governor Scott for his leadership in championing cancer treatment legislation. By signing this bill into law today, the Governor is making a great difference in benefiting the health and well-being of countless Floridians.”

Representative Dana Young said, “This legislation will bring the latest care to Floridians that are suffering with cancer or caring for their loved ones dealing with this disease. We provided funding to enable two cancer centers to achieve the highest NCI designation that will help not only bring the latest care methods to Florida, but will help grow Florida’s research system. I will continue to work toward Florida being the Number 1 State for research during my lifetime. We will continue to give our families, friends and neighbors hope and direction as they and their loved ones journey against cancer.”

Representative Seth McKeel said, “We thank Governor Scott for his recommendation on additional funding for cancer research. We were proud to pass this legislation and look forward to seeing how the Florida Consortium of National Cancer Institute Centers Program will help Florida families.”

Representative Richard Corcoran said, “Investing in cancer research is the first step we can take towards saving the lives of many Floridians. On behalf of families across the state, I thank Governor Scott for making cancer research a priority.”

Representative Jose Oliva said, “This legislation will help researchers and doctors find better drugs and new treatments to help combat this terrible disease. We thank Governor Scott for his leadership on this issue and are proud to support him as he signs HB 5203.”

Representative Dave Hood said, “The great Satan, cancer, continues to kill. This legislation is critical for the many Florida families affected by cancer. The governor’s leadership in signing this legislation to invest and develop cancer research in our state will ultimately save countless lives and families. Governor Scott has demonstrated his courage repeatedly and continues to do the right thing for the right reason.”

Representative Debbie Mayfield said, “The establishment of the Florida Consortium of National Cancer Institute Centers Program is a great victory for Florida families whose lives have been touched by cancer. I am honored to join Governor Scott in passing this legislation.”

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