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May 13, 2003

**Re: Assembly Bill 502**

Dear Members of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee,

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Buffy Martin and I am representing the American Cancer Society. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 502.

Nationally, more than 1.2 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed this year alone, and we can expect to lose 555,500 people to cancer in 2003. In Nevada, 10,300 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in this year. About 4,300 Nevadans will die from cancer in 2003. We can no longer ignore the opportunities and hope that clinical trials provide cancer patients and their families. Cancer is a disease that affects the whole person, the whole family, the whole of our society. Only by exercising every treatment possibility can we curb the rates of cancer incidence and death.

Sitting before you is a bill that could dramatically change the lives of cancer patients in our state. Each year our nation invests more than \$15.5 billion in biomedical research. One of the most important ways we can advance and increase cancer treatment knowledge is through clinical trials. Clinical trials offer unique opportunities for testing the viability of certain cancer treatments, while at the same time providing opportunities for improved quality of life and survivorship. The American Cancer Society is in full support of Assembly Bill 502, which would increase clinical trial access for Nevadans, and perhaps through increased access and participation we can find a cure for cancer.

Assembly Bill 502 is also a timely bill. At the end of May 2003, under the leadership of Heather and Jim Murren, ground will be broken to build the Nevada Cancer Institute in Las Vegas. This state of the art comprehensive cancer care center of excellence will allow for all Nevadans to have access to highly specialized care and greater hope. The Nevada Cancer Institute will also conduct clinical trials. It is vital that insurance companies in Nevada cover clinical trials to ensure that our citizens will be able to access the benefits of the Nevada Cancer Institute. Assembly Bill 502 could eliminate the need for cancer patients to leave our state for treatment.

As a lawmaker you make decisions every day that impact Nevadans. Rarely do you have an opportunity to provide such support and hope to those whose lives have been affected by cancer. Assembly Bill 502 would do just that, provide hope and perhaps a new treatment, or even a cure for cancer.

On behalf of the American Cancer Society and out 6,000 state wide volunteers,  
we urge you to support Assembly Bill 502.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Buffy Gail Martin*

Buffy Gail Martin

Government Relations Director - Nevada