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LUNG CANCER ALLIANCE PRAISES VFW CALL FOR LUNG CANCER SCREENING AND RESEARCH

Washington, DC [September 26, 2006]--Today Lung Cancer Alliance (LCA), the only national organization providing patient support and advocacy exclusive to those living with or at risk for lung cancer, hailed the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) for calling for a lung cancer screening program and more lung cancer research funding for military personnel and veterans. The resolution, unanimously adopted at the VFW annual convention, also calls upon Congress and the Department of Defense (DOD) to fund lung cancer research through its medical research program.

“This is the most aggressive step forward to date to provide our service men and women a ‘fair shake’ in beating lung cancer,” said Laurie Fenton, President of LCA. “Higher smoking rates in the services, where cigarettes have been given away and subsidized for decades, compounded by exposures to carcinogens such as Agent Orange, Gulf War battlefield toxins and asbestos on submarines, put service men and women at higher risk for lung cancer than the civilian population.”

Fenton continued, “Given that lung cancer is the biggest cancer killer by a huge margin in both the civilian as well as the military population, with a five-year survival rate of only 15 percent, and 70 percent of lung cancer diagnoses occurring at late stage, we must start detecting this cancer on a regular basis at an early treatable stage.”

Following a meeting with LCA earlier this year, the VFW’s Executive Director, Robert E. Wallace, issued strong statements of support, and last month at VFW’s annual meeting, the VFW Commander in Chief, Gary Kurpius, proposed a resolution calling for the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs to establish a pilot lung cancer screening program.

Fenton added, “When we have CT technology now able to detect lung cancer at the earliest stages when it can be cured, it is unconscionable that our service men and women, who have put their lives on the line in defense of our country, are not being offered this life-saving diagnostic tool. Don’t we own them at least that?”

The Department of Defense is currently reviewing its cancer screening and treatment programs and LCA is working with Members of Congress to establish quality standards for CT screening.

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NO MORE EXCUSES. NO MORE LUNG CANCER.

Fenton concluded, “LCA wishes to publicly acknowledge the VFW for coming forward on this issue and thanks its membership, Commander in Chief Kurpius and Executive Director Wallace for their leadership and their sensitivity to the needs for our military personnel. They have set an important standard that we hope will be recognized and carried out.

To view the resolution, please visit Lung Cancer Alliance online at www.lungcanceralliance.org.

The Lung Cancer Alliance is the only national non-profit organization solely dedicated to patient support and advocacy for people living with, or at risk for, lung cancer. As the number one cancer killer, lung cancer will kill more than 160,000 Americans this year alone, causing more deaths than breast, prostate, colon, liver, kidney cancers and melanoma combined.

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