

Administration of Barack Obama, 2016

Statement on Senate Passage of the 21st Century Cures Act

December 7, 2016

We are now one step closer to ending cancer as we know it, unlocking cures for diseases like Alzheimer's, and helping people seeking treatment for opioid addiction finally get the help they need. The bipartisan passage of the 21st Century Cures Act is an example of the progress we can make when people from both parties work together to improve the health of our families, friends, and neighbors.

The Cures Act makes important investments that will save lives. First, for the families and communities that have lost too many loved ones to the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic, it invests the \$1 billion I requested in my budget to address this crisis. Second, the bill answers the Vice President's call for a moonshot in cancer research by investing \$1.8 billion in new resources to accelerate discoveries. Third, it invests nearly \$3 billion to build upon the major biomedical research initiatives we have launched in my administration—known as the BRAIN and Precision Medicine Initiatives—which are tackling diseases like Alzheimer's and creating new research models to find cures and better target treatments. Fourth, the Cures Act takes important steps to improve mental health, including building on the work of my administration's Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force. And fifth, the legislation advances the progress we've made in improving the Food and Drug Administration's drug development process by, for example, making sure patients' voices are part of those decisions.

This is a reminder of what we can do when we look out for one another. Like Joe Biden and so many other Americans, I've lost people I love deeply to cancer. I've heard often from those whose loved ones are suffering from Alzheimer's, addiction, and other debilitating diseases. Their heartbreak is real, and so we have a responsibility to respond with real solutions. This bill will make a big difference, and I look forward to signing it as soon as it reaches my desk.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 34.

Categories: Statements by the President : 21st Century Cures Act, Senate passage.

Names: Biden, Joseph R., Jr.

Subjects: Diseases : Alzheimer's disease and brain disorders; Diseases : Cancer research, prevention, and treatment; Drug abuse and trafficking : Addiction treatment and reduction efforts; Health and medical care : Mental health programs and services; Health and medical care : Precision medicine, strengthening efforts; Health and medical care : Research and development; Legislation, proposed : 21st Century Cures Act; White House Office : Vice President.

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