



EXHIBIT 4
DATE 4-6-05
ST 28

April 5, 2005

Representative Arlene Becker, Chair
Human Services Committee
Montana House
PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Kristin Page Nei. I am here today representing the American Cancer Society. We ask for your support of SJ28.

The mission of the American Cancer Society is to eliminate cancer as a major health issue by addressing preventing cancer, saving lives and improving the quality of life for cancer survivors from the moment of diagnosis through the balance of their life.

Pain and Symptom Management is a Quality of Life issue for cancer survivors.

Pain is a major health problem in the US, especially the kind of pain that is often experienced by individuals with cancer.

- Approximately 50-70 percent of cancer patients experience uncontrolled pain at some point during their illness, depending on the state of the disease.^{1,2}
- Research indicates that over 40 percent of advanced cancer patients with pain do not get adequate relief of their pain in spite of the fact that medications and other therapies currently exist to relieve almost all cancer pain.³
- Evidence suggests that the majority of Americans greatly fear prolonged pain.⁴ Since pain is one of the most common symptoms of cancer, fear of pain is likely to be one of the major reasons that Americans fear cancer more than other diseases.
- Under-treatment of pain has significant adverse effects on quality of life and has been associated with patient despair and depression.
- It has been estimated that US business and industry loses about \$90 billion annually (ins sick time, reduced productivity, and direct medical and other benefit costs) due to chronic pain among employees.⁵

A diagnosis of cancer may trigger common emotions of fear, anxiety, sadness, confusion and feelings of depression and helplessness. When pain is severe, the emotions are exacerbated and may lead to despair – life may not seem worth living. Pain can interfere

with day-to-day activities and diminish a person's physical, psychological, and interpersonal well-being. The treatment and management of pain and its accompanying symptoms must be improved significantly. The American Cancer Society believes that the inadequate treatment of pain is a significant public health problem in the United States and here in Montana.

We are honored to be a part of the palliative care community working to improve pain and symptom management in Montana. Given the lack of capacity to take on another task force at the state health department level and the importance of Pain and Symptom Management, the American Cancer Society will do its part to help raise funds for the statewide pain and symptom management assessment and for the operation of the statewide task force. We also will commit to staffing the task force.

Last Acts – A national coalition to improve care and caring near the end of life evaluated Montana's state pain policies and other policies affecting quality end-of-life care in November of 2002.

In Last Acts opinion, Montana has many areas where we can improve our pain management policies.

These include:

Location of Death

Hospice Use

Hospital End-of-Life Care services

Pain Among Nursing Home Residents

On a brighter note:

We are doing well in Montana in Palliative Care-Certified Physicians and Nurses.

By supporting this resolution you will be helping to heighten the state's awareness of Pain and Symptom Management as a major health issue and reinforcing the legislature's commitment to review the findings of the statewide task force and consider policy recommendations during future sessions.

We would appreciate your support Senate Joint Resolution 28.

Sincerely,



Kristin Page Nei

Montana Director of Government Relations

¹ Foley KM. The treatment of cancer pain. *New Engl J Med* 1985;313:84-95.

² Cleeland CS, Gonin R, Hatfield AK, et al. Pain and its treatment in outpatients with metastatic cancer. *New Engl J Med* 1994;330:582-6.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Foley KM. Controlling cancer pain. *Hosp Pract* 2000;35:101-8, 11-2.

⁵ American Chronic Pain Association. Available via the Internet at:
<http://www.theacpa.org/whatispain.htm>