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American Lung Association Finds That Pennsylvania Can do More to Reduce the Toll of Lung Cancer – the #1 Cancer Killer of Women and Men

2018 ‘State of Lung Cancer’ report shows how lung cancer success rates vary state by state, and what Pennsylvania can do to better support lung cancer patients and those at high risk.

Harrisburg, PA [EMBARGOED UNTIL: 12:01 a.m. EST, February 28, 2018] – Every two and a half minutes someone in the United States will be diagnosed with lung cancer. The American Lung Association’s inaugural LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer” report brings together national and state-specific data to show how the toll of lung cancer varies by state, and how Pennsylvania can do more to protect their residents from lung cancer.

“There will be more than 10,470 people in Pennsylvania diagnosed with lung cancer and 7,280 will succumb to the deadly disease in 2018. More must be done to save lives,” said Deborah P. Brown, Executive Vice President, American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic. “The American Lung Association’s [LUNG FORCE](#) initiative was created to help defeat lung cancer and give hope to families facing this diagnosis. In order to do so, we need a multipronged approach that engages a variety of tactics and stakeholders to address the disease, its risk factors, and access to preventative health services and treatment options.”

In its first year, the LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer” finds that lung cancer diagnoses and survival rates vary state by state. By better understanding the impact of lung cancer at the state level, we can enact policies and focus attention on where the need is greatest. This report covers the following measures of lung cancer burden, and shows where Pennsylvania ranks in comparison to the rest of the United States:

- **Incidence:** On average, the higher prevalence of smoking, the more lung cancer cases in a state. ***Pennsylvania ranks 31 out of 50 states and the District of Columbia with a lung cancer incidence of 66.7 per 100,000 people.*** There are a variety of risk factors associated with lung cancer, including smoking, exposure to radon gas, air pollution and secondhand smoke. Radon testing and mitigation, healthy air protections, and reducing the smoking rate through tobacco tax increases, smokefree air laws and access to comprehensive quit smoking services are all effective ways to prevent new lung cancer cases.
- **Survival Rate:** Lung cancer is often not caught at an early stage when it is more likely to be curable. ***The five-year lung cancer survival rate ranges from 24 percent in New York to 15.9 percent in Louisiana, with Pennsylvania at 20.7 percent.*** Yet only 31 states track this important metric, which should be implemented by all states to enhance monitoring of lung cancer, and help identify how to improve lung cancer survival.
- **Stage at Diagnosis:** People diagnosed at early stages of lung cancer are five times more likely to survive, but unfortunately only 18.9 percent of lung cancer cases nationally are diagnosed at an early

stage. ***In Pennsylvania, only 18.1 percent of lung cancer cases were diagnosed at early stages, when it is most likely to be curable.***

- **Screening Centers:** The availability of accredited lung cancer screening sites has been shown to be positively related to survival of lung cancer, with each additional screening site per million people being associated with a 0.3 point increase in the lung cancer survival rate. ***Pennsylvania ranks 6 out of 50 states and the District of Columbia, with 8.7 screening centers per million people.*** Supporting awareness of these screening facilities, as well as criteria for low-dose CT scans, can improve patient outcomes.
- **Surgical Treatment:** Lung cancer is more likely to be curable if the tumor can be surgically removed, and surgery is more likely to be an option if the diagnosis is made at an early stage before the cancer has spread. ***In Pennsylvania, 22.4 percent of cases underwent surgery as part of the first course of treatment, ranking 11 out of 48 states and the District of Columbia.*** In addition to screening centers, quality healthcare and new treatment options for lung cancer are needed to increase survival rates.

“While we have seen some advancements in lung cancer treatment options and a new method of early detection, the burden of lung cancer is not the same everywhere,” said Brown. “Treatment, exposure to risk factors, and access to screening facilities vary from state to state, and Pennsylvania’s leaders must do more to act and implement proven policies to reduce the deadly toll of lung cancer.”

On Wednesday, March 14, 2018 lung cancer survivors will be heading to Capitol Hill to share their story and these startling statistics with members of Congress. LUNG FORCE Heroes from all 50 states will be asking Congress to support increased funding for the National Institutes of Health for better treatment and early detection of lung cancer, as well as sharing why quality and affordable healthcare is especially important for lung cancer patients.

The LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer” report is both a guide post and rallying cry, providing policymakers, researchers, healthcare practitioners, as well as patients, caregivers and others committed to ending lung cancer, with a one-stop resource for identifying how their state can best focus to support lung cancer patients, their caregivers, and those at high risk for lung cancer.

For media interested in speaking with an expert about the LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer” report, contact the American Lung Association in Pennsylvania Communications Director Ewa Dworakowski at Ewa.Dworakowski@lung.org or 717-503-3903 (cell).

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About the American Lung Association in Pennsylvania

The American Lung Association in Pennsylvania is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease, through research, education and advocacy. The work of the American Lung Association in Pennsylvania is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to improve the air we breathe; to reduce the burden of lung disease on individuals and their families; and to eliminate

tobacco use and tobacco-related diseases. For more information about the American Lung Association in Pennsylvania, a holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872) or visit: Lung.org.

About LUNG FORCE

LUNG FORCE is a new national movement led by the American Lung Association to unite women against lung cancer, the #1 cancer killer of women. LUNG FORCE has three priorities: 1) Make lung cancer a cause that people care about—and act on; 2) Educate and empower patients and healthcare providers and 3) Raise critical funds for lung cancer research. The American Lung Association's LUNG FORCE is nationally presented by CVS Health. Find out more at LUNGFORCE.org.

About LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer”

The inaugural LUNG FORCE “State of Lung Cancer” report includes available state-specific measures of lung cancer incidence, adult smoking prevalence, radon zones, five-year survival, stage at diagnosis, five-year survival by stage at diagnosis, surgery as part of the first course of treatment, and accredited lung cancer screening centers. Data was compiled from a variety of sources including the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries; American College of Radiology; National Cancer Institute's Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program; CDC's WONDER Online Database; Maryland Cancer Registry (supported by funds from the State of Maryland, the Maryland Cigarette Restitution Fund, and the CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries); CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System; Environmental Protection Agency's Map of Radon Zones; and U.S. Census Bureau. See the full report at Lung.org/solc.

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