

Whereas, lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among men and women in the United States and Bluffton, South Carolina, accounting for more deaths than colon cancer, breast cancer, and prostate cancer combined; (1-2)

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control, there were 660 new cases and 433 deaths because of lung cancer from 2016-2020 in Beaufort County; (2)

Whereas the 5-year survival rate for localized lung cancer is ~60%, yet only ~24% of lung cancers are diagnosed at this stage; (1)

Whereas, screening for lung cancer for high-risk individuals using low-dose computed tomography can lead to the earlier detection of lung cancer and save lives, reducing the mortality by 20% when compared to screening by chest x-ray in the National Lung Screening Trial (3) and reducing the risk of death at 10 years by 24% in men and 33% in women as demonstrated by another large randomized trial; (4)

Whereas, funding for lung cancer research trails far behind funding for research of many other cancers, and additional research is needed in early diagnosis, screening, and treatment for lung cancer as well as in lung cancer affecting women and lung cancer health disparities;

Whereas lung cancer incidence is decreasing twice as fast in men as it is in women, each year more women die from lung cancer than breast cancer and by 2035, more women will die from lung cancer than men; (6-7)

Whereas African Americans have the highest lung cancer incidence and mortality of all races, and disparities in lung cancer screening, diagnosis, treatment, and mortality are well characterized among African Americans and other racial minorities. (8)

Whereas lung cancer in individuals who never smoked is the 7th leading cause of cancer-related death and accounts for 17,000-26,000 deaths in the US every year (7), 60-70% of individuals diagnosed with lung cancer who never smoked are women (9,10), and the proportion of lung cancers diagnosed in people who never smoked is increasing in the US; (10,11). Whereas radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among individuals who never smoked and the second leading cause of lung cancer overall; (12-13)

Whereas the stigma surrounding lung cancer creates barriers to early diagnosis, treatment, and funding for research, has a detrimental impact on the quality of life of people diagnosed with lung cancer, and hinders awareness of and research into lung cancer risk factors other than smoking;

Whereas lung cancer research is leading to breakthroughs in the identification of genetic alterations associated with lung cancer and in the development of lung cancer treatments, including immunotherapies and targeted therapies; (14-17)

Whereas, organizations working in Bluffton, South Carolina, such as the American Lung Cancer Screening Initiative and Women's Lung Cancer Forum, are committed to educating about lung cancer and lung cancer screening and working to increase lung cancer screening rates in Bluffton, South Carolina.

Therefore, I, Mayor Lisa Sulka, hereby proclaim November 2023 as Lung Cancer Awareness Month in Bluffton, South Carolina, and recognize the need for research in lung cancer affecting women and lung cancer health disparities, and encourage all citizens to learn about lung cancer and early detection through lung cancer screening.

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