



## **PETITION TO INCREASE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH**

When you lose one child to cancer the pain is unbearable. But how do you go on living when both of your children pass away from this evil disease? Unfortunately, this is the life I now live. Both of my children lost their lives to cancer within 2 years of each other. I went from spending time with one of my children in the hospital and leaving one at home, to staying with both of them at the hospital. They were my only children and losing them has been such an unbearable feeling. It feels like I am living life without a heartbeat.

Armando was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in 2012, when he was 15 years old. ALL is a type of blood cancer that starts from white blood cells called lymphocytes in the bone marrow. It is the most common form of cancer found in children, accounting for 30% of all pediatric cancers. There are about 3,000 cases of ALL in children and youth up to 21 each year in the United States alone. Leukemia is not hereditary in most cases. However, people can

inherit genetic abnormalities that increase their risk of developing this form of cancer.

I felt helpless not knowing how to make him feel better. He went through chemo, radiation, bone marrow transplant and multiple surgeries to no avail. Instead of talking about the life he was going to live, I had to have him make decisions about the end of his life. Armando fought cancer for 5 years before we found out that his brother Reuben who was 20 at the time, was diagnosed with the same type of cancer. He was suffering from constant nose bleeds, which in turn led to his diagnosis. It was a devastating blow as a mother to find out that both of my children were now having to fight for their lives.

There are multiple struggles that families face when their child is diagnosed with cancer. I almost lost my job, having to take so much time off to be with my children. I had to file for bankruptcy due to the fact that we are unable to pay the million dollar medical bills that have piled up over the years. Something more needs to be done for our kids. No other family should have to endure this type of pain and suffering. Too many of us have to say goodbye to our children due to this disease.

My son Armando fought for another 2 years after his brother's diagnosis. The cancer metastasized to his brain, so he was no longer able to communicate and was suffering from horrendous pain. Shortly after that, it took his life. Ruben only had 10 months with us after his diagnosis. The cancer quickly metastasized to his liver and bladder and there was nothing more that could be done to save him. Within a 2 year time frame I lost my only two children to cancer. The only thing I am left with is their memory. Life has not been, nor will it ever be the same.

The federal government has allocated a baffling 4% of government funding for cancer research in the United States, which is far from enough. This percentage needs to be increased to a minimum of 8% for proper research. The signing of this petition will facilitate the lobbying and passing of a healthcare policy or law that allocates a higher percentage of national resources to childhood cancer research. We need 12 million signatures to proceed to the next phase of raising the funding percentage. We need your help to get there. Please click on the link below to add your signature to the list of supporters.

**[CLICK HERE TO SIGN](#)**