



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

Our daughter Ava Lee was 5 years old when she was diagnosed with Biphentotypic Leukemia. She fought for 3 years before passing away in 2017 at the age of 8 years old.

The types of emotional distress it has caused our child and family include depression, anxiety, deep grief and stress. The hardest part of this cancer journey was having to watch my child suffer.

Today's treatments for these children are absolutely not humane. The chemo caused her organs to fail, her self esteem to decline, indescribable pain, unbelievable side effects, undue stress and emotional duress.

Ava's battle with cancer and ultimate death was the most traumatic event our family has had to endure. She was diagnosed at 5 years old with a rare type of leukemia and underwent multiple rounds of toxic chemo; as well as a bone marrow transplant. Though the treatments were hell, we made her go through them so that we could have a shot at watching her grow up. The side effects of treatment ranged from hair loss, stunted growth, damage to brain cells, chemical burns, excruciating GVHD (graft vs host disease), loss of learning, truncated childhood, endless stays in the hospital, depression and anxiety to name just a few.

Since her disease was rare, her treatments felt more like experiments than tried and true methods. My precious daughter was a Guinea pig and we were the ones who allowed her to be used as a testing subject. We live with that guilt daily. Her death caused our family to break in many ways. We are still reeling from our loss and I know every single member has suffered emotionally from the same experience as ours.

After beating it the first time when she was 5 with chemo, radiation and transplant; Ava relapsed with Leukemia Cutis at the age of 7. Her prognosis was very poor, but we were by her side the whole fight cheering her on.

I am so passionate about joining this campaign because I want to honor Ava by making sure no other child has to go through what she went through. I will be supporting this petition with Chad along with other families in D.C.

According to The American Cancer Society the Key Statistics for Childhood Cancers reveal that about 10,470 children in the United States under the age of 15 will be diagnosed with cancer in 2022. Childhood cancer rates have been rising slightly for the past few decades. After accidents, cancer is the second leading cause of death in children ages 1 to 14. About 1,050 children under the age of 15 are expected to die from cancer in 2022.

By signing this petition, you will be giving a voice to the children who were unable to live long enough to be their own voice for change. We need to increase childhood cancer research funding from 4% to 8% so that our children, present and future, are spending less time in hospitals and more time being kids. We cannot do this alone, we need your help. Twelve million signatures are necessary to start the next phase of raising the percentage. Please stand with us in our fight.

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