



Research ■ Policy ■ Awareness

April 9, 2006

The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0048

Dear Assemblyman Ridley-Thomas,

**C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition is pleased to offer our full support to your Assembly Bill 2339: Colorectal Cancer Screening and Treatment Program.** C3 is a national organization whose mission is to eliminate suffering and death due to colorectal cancer. We push for research to improve screening, diagnosis, and treatment of colorectal cancer; for policy decisions that make the most effective colorectal cancer prevention and treatment available to all; and for increased awareness that colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable.

As you know, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States for men and women combined. The expected toll for Californians in 2006 is 14,820 diagnoses and 5500 deaths (*American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2006. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2006.*).

**Screening for colorectal cancer is critical:**

- If you are over age 50, you are at risk for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer affects men and women of all races. If you have personal or family risk factors, your risk may be higher.
- The most common symptom of colorectal cancer is no symptom. Symptoms typically appear late in the disease, once it has spread.
- Screening saves lives. Screening saves lives in two ways: by diagnosing cancer early and by preventing cancer from occurring in the first place. When diagnosed in its earliest stages, cure rates are over 90%. Once colorectal cancer has spread, cure rates drop dramatically.
- Screening is cost effective. The estimated cost of colon cancer screening is well within the benchmark figure of \$40,000 per year of life saved, which is considered by the government to be cost-effective.

**Access to screening for the underserved is a large and growing problem**, which has resulted in higher death rates in many minority populations.

**Assembly Bill 2339 will address this health disparity** by providing access to screening for the underserved. We applaud you for introducing this critical legislation.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nancy Roach'.

Nancy Roach  
President and Chair, Board of Directors