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October 20, 2010

The Honorable Lois Capps  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1110 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Capps:

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership in introducing H.R. 6224 – 21st Century Cancer ALERT Act. On behalf of the patients and their families who have been impacted by Sarcoma, we applaud your efforts to strengthen our nation's fight against cancer.

Sarcoma is a rare cancer that is often forgotten when cancer research funds are allocated. It appears in a variety of tissue structures, including nerves, muscles, fat, joints, and bone, collectively referred to as the body's connective tissues. Tumors are often hidden deep in the body, thus making it difficult for an early diagnosis. Sarcomas are most prevalent in children, making up approximately 15 percent of all childhood cancers. At any one time, an estimated 50,000 patients in the United States are battling Sarcoma. About 12,000 new cases are diagnosed each year and 4,500 to 5,500 individuals are likely to die from Sarcoma annually. Unfortunately, only one drug has been approved by the FDA specifically for use in the treatment of Sarcoma.

The Sarcoma Foundation of America (SFA) is especially pleased to see language in the ALERT Act directing the Food and Drug Administration to conduct a review and improve policies related to oncology products, including **considering alternatives or surrogates to traditional clinical trial endpoints**. The SFA strongly believes that FDA acceptance of clinical endpoints other than overall survival could remove many of the present barriers in the development of drugs to treat rare cancers such as Sarcomas.

I thank you for your hard work in crafting this legislation. We look forward to working with you and your staff on this vitally important issue.

Sincerely,



Mark Thornton, M.D., Ph.D.  
President