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American Cancer Society Reveals Plans for Hope Lodge Houston *The Society Focuses on Raising Funds to Provide a Safe Haven for Cancer Patients in the Bayou City*

HOUSTON, (August 23, 2012) – The American Cancer Society (the Society) is proud to announce plans to build Hope Lodge Houston, the largest facility of its kind in the U.S., to provide free lodging and support for those traveling to receive cancer treatment in the Greater Houston area.

Each year more than 96,000 cancer patients travel to Houston seeking quality treatment and follow-up care. The expenses of traveling away from home and finding affordable lodging and transportation is a challenge that often costs patients up to \$11,000 before taxes, meals and local transportation. Houston’s average hotel room rate is \$153 per night and some medical rooms, with limited availability, are as low at \$50. Hope Lodge’s 62 patient suites will provide up to 23,000 nights of free lodging, representing a combined savings to cancer patients of over \$2 million per year.

“The goals of Hope Lodge Houston are to allow patients to have a comfortable place to stay throughout the entire course of their treatment, to promote recovery by providing a safe and emotionally supportive environment, and to ease the extraordinary financial burden cancer places on families,” explains Betti Guzman, Regional Vice President of the American Cancer Society.

Hope Lodge Houston will be open year-round with a design similar to a large home including a shared kitchen, dining spaces, a help-yourself pantry, daily linen service and patient laundry facilities as well as a library with Internet access. Support groups and social activities will also be available for guests.

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center has provided land for the project in the Texas Medical Center at 7505 Almeda Road between Holcombe Boulevard and the 610 Loop. The Society must raise 85 percent of the budget for Hope Lodge before the projected groundbreaking, scheduled tentatively for July 2013. Currently, the Society has raised 25 percent of the \$30 million budget they need to construct and operate Hope Lodge Houston.

This will be the country's largest facility, accommodating 62 patients and their caregivers within its five-story, 76,000 square-foot building. Hope Lodge Houston is the second of its kind in Texas and 32nd in the country. Additional Hope Lodges are located across the country in 21 states and Puerto Rico.

"The American Cancer Society believes it is time to offer cancer patients in Houston the kind of safe and supportive lodging environment that other major American cities provide," said Guzman. "With the support from prominent chairs, many financial supporters and the citizens of the Bayou City, we are excited to build hope and touch the lives of cancer patients and their families everywhere."

The Society is proud to have President George and Mrs. Barbara Bush as honorary chairs, and Robert and Janice McNair as the *Build hope, Touch lives* campaign chairs.

"Janice and I are honored to chair the American Cancer Society's capital campaign to build a Hope Lodge facility in Houston," said Robert McNair. "The fight against cancer is something that we have experienced firsthand, and one that nearly everyone will encounter at some point in their lives. The Hope Lodge will allow patients and their families to put the stress and worry of finding a place to stay out of their minds and focus on the most important goal – defeating this dreadful disease. We encourage anyone who has been impacted by cancer to help provide hope to those who may be affected in the future by joining in this campaign."

For more information on the Society and their cancer fighting initiatives visit www.cancer.org.

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About the American Cancer Society:

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.5 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us any time, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).