

# MAJOR VICTORY FOR THOUSANDS OF WISCONSIN CANCER PATIENTS

*Lawmakers approve bill to give equal access to cancer clinical trials + improve minority participation*

MADISON, WI, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Governor Tony Evers has sign a bill into law that will help thousands of cancer patients in Wisconsin gain access to advanced treatment. [SB 489](#) aims to improve participation and retention in cancer clinical trials, especially among underserved populations.

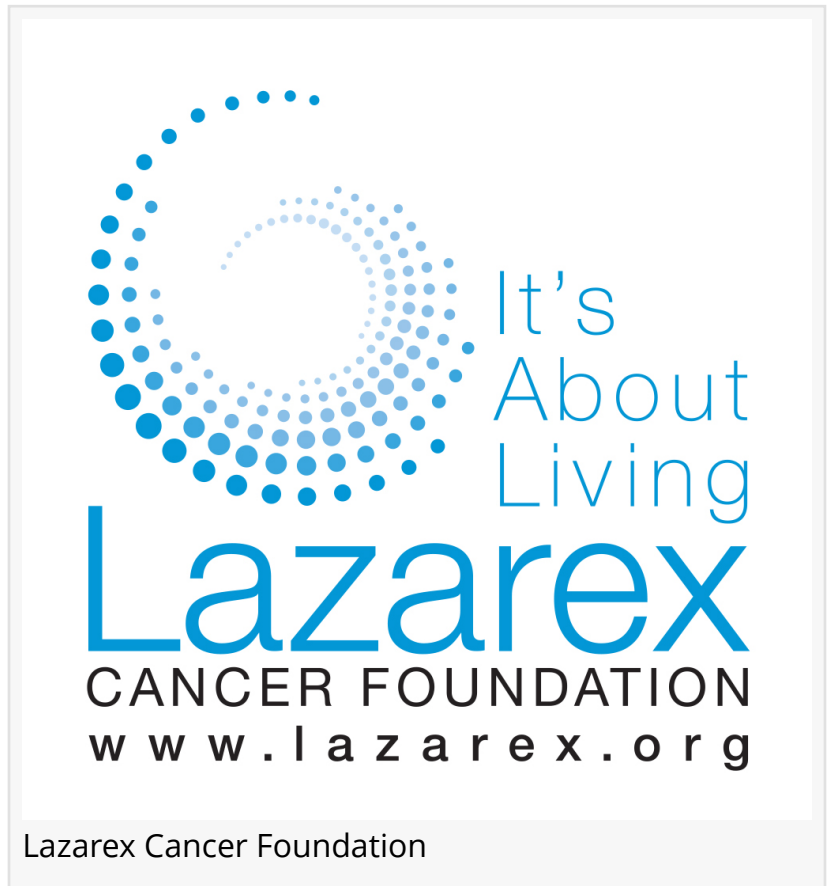
The legislative action is the result of an effort by [Lazarex Cancer Foundation](#) and members of the state legislature to bring attention to this critical problem. Co-authored by Lazarex, SB 489 clarifies that reimbursing patients for the out of pocket expenses necessary to travel to a clinical trial site are not to be considered inducements or coercion.

A [national study](#) found that patient households making less than \$50,000 annually were almost 30 percent less likely to participate in clinical trials. This disparity threatens one of the most basic ethical foundations of clinical research: the requirements that the benefits of research be made available equitably among all eligible individuals.

Clinical trials offer advanced treatments before the general public can access them. All new treatments must complete a clinical trial before becoming FDA approved, and they must have patients enrolled to be successful. However, an estimated 97 percent of cancer patients don't enroll because clinical trial sites are often far from home, making travel for patients both difficult and financially burdensome.

Lazarex Founder Dana Dornsife said, "I want to especially thank Representative Bob Kulp, the author of the bill, for taking a leadership role in this effort in Wisconsin. Without his leadership this wouldn't have happened. If we don't have fully enrolled clinical trials with a diverse pool of patients, new treatments are not possible. Clinical trials are the pathway to new treatments. But when you have only 3% of cancer patients enrolling in clinical trials and about 50% of clinical trials failing because they can't enroll enough patients, the pathway is blocked. That's why Lazarex raised this issue in Wisconsin."

Similar legislation is currently being considered in Massachusetts, Florida, New Mexico, and is



already law in California, Pennsylvania, Texas and Illinois.

#### About Lazarex Cancer Foundation

Lazarex is the only non-profit in the United States that assists patients with finding clinical trials and reimburses them for the out of pocket travel costs involved in getting to those clinical trials. In its 14 years, Lazarex has helped reimburse the travel expenses for more than 5,500 patients in clinical trials. In 2018, at the urging of Lazarex, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) changed its official guidance, issuing new language allowing pharmaceutical companies to reimburse patients for travel costs to get to clinical trials, although not all trial sponsors do this.

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