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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:** Your First and Last Name

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**City or State’s Location Shines a Light for Esophageal Cancer Awareness Month**

**City, State** (Date of Lighting) – On the evening of Day of the Week, Date, the **Location/Building** in City, State will be illuminated with periwinkle blue light in honor of Esophageal Cancer Awareness Month. **Esophageal Cancer is the fastest increasing cancer among American men – and one of the deadliest**. Raising awareness about this cancer is particularly important because most Americans don’t know that **the type of Esophageal Cancer most prevalent in the U.S. is caused by acid reflux or GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease)**. In recent years, the type of Esophageal Cancer caused by reflux disease has doubled among younger patients - and they are most often diagnosed at hard-to-treat late stages.

Families throughout the United States who have been touched by Esophageal Cancer are working with the [Esophageal Cancer Action Network (ECAN)](about:blank) to raise public awareness of the fact that Heartburn can cause Cancer. That includes your First and Last Name of City, State. Nobody understands better why that’s important. [Your Name or the Name of your Loved One] who was diagnosed in \_\_\_[year]\_\_ with Esophageal Cancer (or whose husband, wife, friend died / was diagnosed....). \_[Your Name]\_ got involved in building awareness because he/she wants to prevent other families from experiencing the pain \_[he/she or his/her family, friend, etc.]\_ has endured.

Share additional details of your story or direct quotes from survivors affected by Esophageal Cancer.

The Esophageal Cancer Action Network (ECAN) spearheaded the movement to designate April as Esophageal Cancer Awareness Month more than ten years ago.ECAN **is** a national nonprofit organization based in Baltimore, Maryland. Its mission is to save lives by increasing awareness about the link between acid reflux and Esophageal Cancer.

**“One American dies of this preventable cancer every 36 minutes,** **and the type of Esophageal Cancer increasing so rapidly in the U.S. is usually caused by reflux disease,”** said ECAN President and CEO **Mindy Mintz Mordecai.** An attorney and former television journalist, Mordecai founded the organization after losing her husband and the father of their two young daughters to the disease in 2008.

**Facts about Esophageal Cancer:**

* **Most cases of Esophageal Cancer in the United States are caused by acid reflux.**
* **Reflux symptoms include heartburn, chronic cough, sore throat, hoarse voice, choking when lying down.**
* **Only one out of five patients diagnosed with Esophageal Cancer will survive five years**, largely because it is usually discovered at late stages when treatment is rarely effective.
* **When treated at early stages, Esophageal Cancer survival rates are dramatically improved**.
* **Esophageal Cancer can be prevented if its precursor - a condition called Barrett’s Esophagus - is detected and treated.**
* **Barrett’s Esophagus causes no symptoms** – in fact, many patients will get a false sense of security because their heartburn symptoms often go away when they develop this condition.
* **Only 14% of Americans know that reflux disease can lead to cancer.** \*

**ECAN has a free, downloadable Guide for Patients at** [Get-Checked.org](about:blank).

About ECAN

**ECAN’s mission is to save lives** by increasing awareness about the link between heartburn and cancer, promoting early detection and supporting medical innovation to prevent, detect and treat Esophageal Cancer. The Baltimore-based, national non-profit organization is led by a board of directors of top physicians, business leaders and families that have been touched by Esophageal Cancer.

ECAN’s advocacy resulted in more than $15 million in additional Esophageal Cancer research funding in the last three years, and new immunotherapies are available to Esophageal Cancer patients in part because of ECAN's successful advocated with the **National Cancer Institute** to include Esophageal Cancer in its groundbreaking genome-mapping project known as **The Cancer Genome Atlas**.

For more information, visit [**www.ecan.org**](http://www.ecan.org).

\*According to a 2017 nationwide IPSOS poll of more than 1,000 Americans commissioned by ECAN.

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