**\*\*Press Release– Alejandro Escovedo and Marissa Jaret Winokur to serve as national spokespeople for Prevent Cancer Foundation\*\***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Alejandro Escovedo and Marissa Jaret Winokur to serve as national spokespeople for Prevent Cancer Foundation**®

*Music stars want you to Think About the Link*® *between viruses and cancer*

ALEXANDRIA, VA — The Prevent Cancer Foundation® announced today singer-songwriter Alejandro Escovedo and Tony-award winner Marissa Jaret Winokur will serve as national spokespeople for *Think About the Link®*, an education campaign about the connection between certain viruses and cancer.

Both Escovedo and Winokur suffered from preventable and treatable viruses that often lead to cancer. Escovedo was diagnosed with hepatitis C in 1996, which is a leading cause of liver cancer. (Together with hepatitis B, these viruses cause at least 65 percent of liver cancer cases.) Winokur was diagnosed with cervical cancer in 2000, which was caused by human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is a common virus that can cause at least six types of cancer and is the cause of more than 90 percent of cervical cancers.

**About Alejandro Escovedo:**

Escovedo comes from a musical family—brothers Coke and Pete played with Santana and niece Sheila E. is a well-known pop star—but he did not begin playing music until his mid-twenties. His music has defied genre, with influences from garage rock, country, punk and traditional Mexican music.

His hepatitis C intensified—and was brought into the spotlight—when he collapsed on-stage in 2003. At the time of his diagnosis, Escovedo was unaware that hepatitis C is one of the leading causes of liver cancer. By the time of his collapse, he had advanced cirrhosis of the liver, as well as tumors in his abdomen and varices in his esophagus.

Today, Escovedo is hep C-cured and healthy. He wants others to have the information he didn’t have; that hepatitis C is linked to cancer, and that it’s critical for those who are at risk to get screened and, if positive, treated for the virus before it leads to cancer.

“Too many people are unaware of the link between hepatitis C and cancer,” Escovedo said. “I am proud to join with the Prevent Cancer Foundation to encourage everyone to take charge of their health and think about the link between viruses and cancer.”

**Escovedo will appear in a national Public Service Announcement (PSA) for *Think About the Link®*. The PSA is available for download** [**here**](http://www.thepsamarket.com/Latest-PSAs/prevent-cancer-foundation----think-about-the-link--public-service-campaign/s/cca6d342-5eed-4b99-b97b-df6922eb23a9) **beginning May 1, 2017.**

**About Marissa Jaret Winokur:**

Winokur was just 27 years old and about to land her big break when she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Weeks later, she was cast in the lead role of Tracy Turnblad in Broadway’s “Hairspray,” for which she would later win a Tony award.

Winokur’s cancer was detected after an abnormal Pap test. Part of her cervix was removed just days after diagnosis, and later, she had a hysterectomy to remove the remaining cancer.

There is now a vaccine available to protect people from HPV. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend the vaccine for all girls and boys ages 11-12, the time when the vaccine is most effective. In addition to the vaccine, the Prevent Cancer Foundation® recommends women begin regular cervical cancer screening at age 21 with a Pap test every three years. Women ages 35-65 should have a Pap test combined with an HPV test every five years, or a Pap test every three years.

Winokur is now cancer-free and wants to spread the word about the importance of getting the HPV vaccine to prevent cancer.

“When I was young, the HPV vaccine wasn’t available, and neither was the HPV test,” she said. “Girls and young women today can protect themselves from cancer, but they have to know their options. That’s why I tell everyone about the link between HPV and cancer, and to speak with your doctor about getting vaccinated and screened so you don’t have to go through what I did.”

**About *Think About the Link®***

*Think About the Link®* focuses on three viruses that can lead to cancer: HPV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The campaign travels the country to increase awareness of the link between viruses and cancer, increase immunization rates for HPV and hepatitis B, and increase awareness of and access to treatment for hepatitis C. The ultimate goal of *Think About the Link®* is to prevent virally-induced cancers.

**About The Prevent Cancer Foundation®**

The Prevent Cancer Foundation® is one of the nation’s leading voluntary health organizations and the *only* U.S. nonprofit focused solely on cancer prevention and early detection.  Founded in 1985, the Foundation has catapulted cancer prevention to prominence and fulfills its mission through research, education, outreach and advocacy nationwide.

For more information, please visit [www.thinkaboutthelink.org](http://www.thinkaboutthelink.org) or [www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org).

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