

## Castle Tapped to Chair Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus -- April 20, 2006

Will focus on medical research funding, recruitment of new scientists

SUSSEX COUNTY, DE -- During a visit to the Beebe Medical Center Outpatient Care Center today, Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today announced that he will be the new Co-Chair of the Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus and outlined his priorities for the Caucus as well. The other co-chairs of the caucus include: Rep. Sherry Boehlert (R-NY), Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA), and Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ). There are over 100 Members of Congress who belong to the Caucus.

The Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus (CBRC) was established in 1989 to broaden the support and knowledge of basic and clinical biomedical research issues throughout the Congress.

Castle's priorities for the caucus include:

- Increased medical research funding,
- Educational forums on disease and treatment discoveries with leading scientists throughout the United States (a copy of the briefings is attached).
- Investing in education to attract future scientists and investigators to the medical research field, specifically by supporting the National Institutes of Health Pathways to Independence Program which is dedicating \$15 million to support 150 to 200 new scientists.

"The importance of biomedical research cannot be stressed enough. Over the past 20 years in medicine, we have seen great advancements due to research, including: the creation of drug-coated stents to help cardiac patients; the identification of biomarkers for cancer patients; the development of vaccines for bioterrorism; and, the use of microsurgery to reduce complications for patients. But research requires a constant investment and that is why this Caucus is fighting so hard against efforts to slash funding for the National Institutes of Health."

President Bush's budget proposal places a hard freeze on NIH funding from the FY06 (\$28.349billion) funding level, which is actually a cut from the FY05 level (\$28.412 billion). This hard freeze adds up to an 11% cut when adjusted for inflation from FY04. Delaware received \$29,174,897 in NIH funding in 2004, compared to \$7,172,636 in 1997.