

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month -- October 2005

By: Congressman Mike Castle

The Big "C" -- cancer. Undoubtedly, the word "cancer" is one of the scariest words in the English language. And unfortunately, it seems to touch all of us -- whether it has been a personal struggle or a struggle faced by family and friends -- it seems inescapable. The National Institutes of Health has designated 2015 as the target date to eradicate cancer, and while that may be a long time off and also may seem like a lofty goal, I believe it is critical that we focus on the necessary research and drug development to increase the rate of survivorship.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and in Congress, we are trying to commemorate this special time, by supporting a resolution that salutes more than two million breast cancer survivors in the United States. The resolution also honors the efforts of the victims, volunteers, and professionals who fight this deadly disease every day and recognizes national and community organizations for promoting awareness about breast cancer. Despite the increasing rate of survivorship, the statistics prove our nation still faces a huge problem in this area. Every three minutes, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer. One out of every eight women who live to the age of 85 will develop breast cancer at some point in her lifetime. And breast cancer is still the leading cause of death among women between the ages of 40 and 55.

This Breast Cancer Awareness Month is a rallying call for all of us -- men and women -- to educate ourselves about cancer and the importance of early screenings, especially mammograms and self-exams. I'd like to salute everyone who devotes their time to creating awareness and educational opportunities for the community, using their time to help save and improve lives. We can learn from these individuals and learn from those that have been through the experience of breast cancer. Listen to survivors and learn from what they have gone through. I encourage you to share your story to those who can learn and use your knowledge and learn from your courage.