

## Castle, Delaware Mom Combine Efforts to Fight Childhood Cancer -- April 11, 2007

WILMINGTON, DE -- Citing the unique challenges facing children who suffer from cancer -- as well as their families -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle is joining efforts with Delaware mom, Jean Brady, who lost her own daughter to cancer, in promoting the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act. Castle is an original cosponsor of the legislation which was introduced in the House of Representatives in March, 2007.

"While considered 'rare', childhood cancer is expected to strike 10,400 children this year and may lead to as many as 1,545 deaths as well, according to the American Cancer Society. This is horrible. I cannot imagine the pain a family goes through when a young one is stricken with such an awful disease," Castle said.

"When I visited the National Institutes of Health a few months ago, I stressed the importance of making childhood cancer research an interdisciplinary priority within the National Cancer Institute. We need to make sure our researchers are able to answer critical questions about cancer at a much faster pace, so we can increase survival rates and deliver less toxic treatments. We also need to create a database to study the entire population and encourage young oncologists to focus on pediatrics early in their careers," Castle said.

The Conquer Childhood Cancer Act takes a comprehensive approach at the federal level to researching, treating, tracking and helping children and their families who are suffering from cancer. It includes the following provisions:

- Provides funding for biomedical research programs aimed at curing and preventing pediatric cancers and improving the lives of children with cancer.
- For children with cancer, this legislation helps to overcome the funding gap so that pediatric oncology experts can answer critical questions about childhood cancer at a much faster pace to increase survival rates, develop less toxic therapies with fewer long-term effects and save more lives.
- Supports a national childhood cancer database that enables researchers for the first time to study the population of children with cancer to monitor the incidence of pediatric cancers, identify cancer causes and aid in the development of prevention strategies. To date, there has not been a mechanism in place in the U.S. to study the entire population of children with cancer.
- For children with cancer, the database gives meaning to their courage and pain by recording their epidemiological data and the results of their treatments, which will lead to new scientific discoveries that are needed to help cure the children who follow them.
- Fosters clinical and translational research for pediatric oncologists especially in the early stages of their career development.

- For children with cancer this means that the newest generation of pediatric cancer experts can contribute to a 50-year

legacy of collaborative research by conducting studies to apply lab discoveries into new therapies to improve patient outcomes.

- Provides informational and educational services to patients and families affected by childhood cancer to help ensure access to best available therapies for pediatric cancers.

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- For children with cancer and their families this means that they are aware of the most up-to-date resources, treatment information and research available to help them cope with a diagnosis and throughout their journey with the disease.

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