

Castle Joins Pro Football Legend John Madden to Raise Diabetes Awareness -- December 6, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle joined John Madden, former National Football League player and coach and the nation's premier broadcast analyst for NFL games, today to discuss the critical need for an increase in federal funding for diabetes research. As co-chair of the House Diabetes Caucus, Rep. Castle has been working to spread awareness and educate people across Delaware and the country about diabetes.

Today's press conference focused on the renewal of the Special Diabetes Program (H.R. 2762 and S. 1494) this year. The Special Diabetes Program was established by Congress in 1997 and provides funding for type 1 diabetes research and Native American diabetes treatment and prevention programs. H.R. 2762 amends the Public Health Service Act to authorize appropriations for FY2009-FY2013 for (1) type 1 diabetes research and (2) diabetes prevention and treatment through Indian health facilities. Without the renewal of this program, federal support for type 1 diabetes research will be cut by 35%.

"The Special Diabetes Program is critical in the search for better treatments and hopefully some day a cure," Rep. Castle said. "Research and education are key tools to combating diabetes, and we need the necessary funding to ensure both of these things are possible. Diabetes is a disease that changes the way you have to think about living your life. I met with student advocates from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation last week, and these children are counting on research to help improve their quality of life."

At today's press conference, Madden was joined by his son Joseph, and six year-old grandson Sam, who was recently diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. "I want to do my part to ensure that the federal commitment to diabetes research remains strong," said Madden. He continued, "My grandson, Sam, insisted on cutting a family vacation short at Disney World this week just to be here in Washington, D.C. and take a stand with me to help find a cure for diabetes."

Nearly 21 million American children and adults - including 70,000 in Delaware - live with diabetes, and another 54 million have pre-diabetes. According to the CDC, one in three Americans - and one in two minorities - born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime, if current trends continue. Every year, diabetes contributes to over 224,000 deaths.

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