

CASTLE RECOGNIZES "NATIONAL DAY TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY" -- May 6, 2008

Urges Teens to Log-On and Take the Quiz

Washington, DC - Delaware Congressman Michael N. Castle, as senior member of House Education and Labor Committee and co-chair of the House Advisory Panel to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, urges Americans and fellow lawmakers to take action to reduce teen pregnancy by supporting the goals of National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The National Day, which will be observed on Wednesday, May 7th, centers on helping teens focus on the importance of postponing pregnancy and parenthood until they are adults. Rep. Castle has been a proponent of this national awareness effort since the start of the campaign in 1996.

"Teen pregnancy is closely linked to a number of social issues such as poverty, overall child well-being, health issues, education, child welfare, and other risky behavior. Not only are there social issues also but substantial public costs associated with adolescent childbearing. Consequently, teen pregnancy should be viewed not just as a reproductive health issue but also as one that works to improve all of these measures," said Rep. Castle.

"The most recent statistics show that the teen pregnancy rate for Delaware is 93 pregnancies for every 1,000 girls age 15-19; while the rate decreased over 23 percent from 1992 to 2000, it still remains above the national average. Since the first National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, the incidence of teen pregnancy nationwide by more than one-third, but there is still more work to be done. Continuing to make strides in this area is critical for ensuring the success of our young people. What is so unique about the issue of teen and unplanned pregnancy is that it is truly a bi-partisan issue. Understandably, the role of the federal government in supporting policies still can get tricky, but the underlying goal of reducing the incidence of teen and unplanned pregnancy is something that is widely supported."

Parents, teachers, lawmakers, and students are working together to prevent too-early pregnancy and parenthood. In fact, the National Campaign recently expanded its mission to also focus on 20-somethings and is working with community college educators and continually works to find new, innovative ways to reduce incidences of unplanned pregnancy. By logging onto www.stayteen.org, teens can take an online quiz that presents them with realistic scenarios and asks them to take a course of action. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, sponsor of the National Day, says the Internet based quiz will empower teens across the nation to make a personal commitment to avoiding unplanned pregnancy. For more information or to learn how you can get involved in Delaware, please visit <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/national/default.aspx>.

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