

March 29, 2009

The Honorable Pat Roberts
United States Senate
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1605

RE: S. 621: Congenital Heart Futures Act

Dear Senator Roberts,

We are writing as members of Congenital Heart Defect Families Association in Kansas City (www.chdfamilies.org) to request your help in making a brighter future for all those born with heart defects. On Tuesday, March 17th, the Congenital Heart Futures Act, legislation calling for research, surveillance, and education in congenital heart disease, was introduced in the Senate by Senators Durbin and Cochran and in the House by Representatives Bilirakis and Space. We are writing to ask you to co-sponsor these bills (S. 621 and H.R. 1570) and help all those born with heart defects live longer, healthier lives.

Congenital heart disease is this country's number one birth defect and kills twice as many children as childhood cancer. Although many children now undergo successful heart repair, most will require special life-long care and face high risks of developing additional heart problems. But up until now there has been virtually no federal investment to address the research and education needs of the 1.2 million Americans now living with congenital heart disease.

We all have very personal stories about how congenital heart defects have impacted our lives. We are all either parents with children struggling with congenital heart defects, or are adults who have lived with congenital heart defects all of our lives. Regardless of our stories, one thing is true. We must work collectively to help improve the lives of those living with congenital heart defects and this proposed legislation is one step in the right direction.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, to which this bill has been referred, you can be particularly helpful. To sign on as a co-sponsor of the bill, please contact Sara Singleton with Senator Durbin at (202) 224-2152.

Thanks in advance for your help in securing a future for all those living with congenital heart disease.

Sincerely yours,

Congenital Heart Defect Families Association

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