

Legislation Text

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Recognizing September 2017 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Philadelphia in Honor of Childhood Cancer Patients, Caregivers, Survivors, and Those Children Who Have Succumbed to the Disease; and Urging the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate to Pass House Resolution 820 and Senate Bill 292, Both Entitled, “Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research Act of 2017 or the Childhood Cancer STAR Act”.

WHEREAS, September is National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and every little gesture of support counts; from visiting children’s hospitals to donating teddy bears to making socks for little patients’ feet, giving a little bit of one’s time is just as appreciated as giving part of one’s paycheck for the cause of researching childhood cancers; and

WHEREAS, Across the world, a child is diagnosed with cancer every 2 minutes. Each year, approximately 16,000 children between birth and age 19 are diagnosed with cancer in the United States. More than 40,000 children are treated for cancer each year. Approximately 1 in 285 children in the United States will be diagnosed with cancer before their 20th birthday; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists cancer as the leading cause of death by disease in children and adolescents under age 14 in the United States. There are over a dozen types of childhood cancers, and numerous subtypes make it challenging to find cures for every form of childhood cancer. Most childhood cancer survivors have long-term health issues due to the treatments they received; by the time they are in their 30s and 40s, more than 95% have a chronic health problem, and 80% have severe or life-threatening conditions; and

WHEREAS, Adults lose an average of 15 years of life to cancer, but children lose an average of 71 years of life to cancer. The average age of diagnosis of childhood cancer patients is 6 years old. Despite this comparatively massive loss of productive years, only 4% of United States federal funding is solely dedicated to childhood cancer research; and

WHEREAS, Despite the significant unmet medical need, pharmaceutical companies have been reluctant to develop drugs appropriate for children with cancer because it requires making an investment in products that are unlikely to cover the high costs associated with their research, development, marketing, and distribution. Only 3 drugs have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat any type of pediatric cancer since the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, On February 2, 2017, Representatives Michael McCaul, Jackie Speier, G.K. Butterfield, and Mike Kelly submitted House Resolution 820, “Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research Act of 2015 or the Childhood Cancer STAR Act” in the United States House of Representatives. Senators Jack Reed, Shelley Moore Capito, Chris Van Hollen, and Johnny Isakson introduced the STAR Act, Senate Bill 292, in the United States Senate on February 3, 2017. The STAR Act focuses on maximizing childhood cancer survivors’ quality of life, moving childhood cancer research forward, and helping children get access to life-saving treatments. It currently has 268 cosponsors in the House and 21 cosponsors in the Senate; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is fortunate to have two of the top children's cancer hospitals in the world, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, who continuously advance the study and treatment of childhood cancer; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes September 2017 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Philadelphia in honor of childhood cancer patients, caregivers, survivors, and those children who have succumbed to the disease; and urges the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate to pass House Resolution 820 and Senate Bill 292, both entitled, "Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research Act of 2017 or the Childhood Cancer STAR Act."