

Families Overjoyed as the U.S. House of Representatives passes the Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act (S.2746/H.R.669)

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 3, 2014 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – “After six years in Congress, I am overwhelmed with the bill’s passage,” said Laura Crandall, SUDC Foundation President and mother of Maria who died inexplicably at the age of 15 months. “This legislation marks the first time our federal government even recognizes the existence of sudden unexplained deaths of children after their first birthday. I am proud of our government today.”

The Sudden Unexpected Death Data Enhancement and Awareness Act (S.2746/H.R.669) amends the Public Health Service Act to help enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life. The legislation provides for consistent data collection related to stillbirths and sudden, unexpected deaths in both infants and children. By better understanding the causes of unexpected sudden death, we can do more to improve the health of all infants and children.

“It is difficult to put into words the intense emotion I feel with the passing of this critical bill. So many of us have joined together, motivated by our grief and the deep love for our children, to do what is right for others. To attempt to fix a broken system, so that the lives of other children can possibly be saved,” says Stacy Nugent whose daughter Paige passed away at the age of 2.

According to the SUDC Foundation, every year, approximately 30,000 families in the U.S. are affected by Stillbirth, Sudden Unexpected Infant Death or Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC). SUDC is defined as the sudden death of a child greater than 1 year of age that remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the child’s medical history (Krous 2005).

“Grieving families have been comforted today knowing that their voices have been heard!” explains Lorri Caffrey, SUDC Foundation Assistant Executive Director, whose daughter Jenna passed away at the age of 16 months. “Our country’s leaders have joined in the fight to know why these tragedies occur and learn to ultimately prevent them. It is a great day in the hearts of so many who have been touched by Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood.”

Passed by unanimous consent in the House, sponsored by Congressman Pallone (D-NJ) and Congressman King (R-NY) and passed by unanimous vote in the Senate, sponsored by Senator Brown (D-OH) and Senator Ayotte (R-NH), the bill now goes to the President’s desk to be signed and become law.

Larry and Carrie Carroll, parents of Savannah, who died at the age of 2, states, "From the day that we discovered our 2-year-old daughter dead in her crib, we've been consumed by two burning questions: 'How did this happen to her?' and 'How can we make sure this never happens to another parent?' Today marks a significant step on the journey to find answers."

For more information: <http://www.sudc.org/>.

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