

SUDC Foundation Applauds Introduction of Federal Bill to Address Unexpected Child, Infant Deaths

CEDAR GROVE, N.J., Oct. 1, 2018 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – The SUDC Foundation is pleased to support Scarlett’s Sunshine on Sudden Unexpected Death Act, legislation introduced by U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), and U.S. Representatives Gwen Moore (WI-04), Tom Cole (OK-04) and Jaime Herrera Beutler (WA-03) to combat Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). The legislation was introduced in honor of Scarlett Pauley, who was lost to SUDC in January 2017 when she was just 16 months old.



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Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) is a category of death in children over the age of one year which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation and autopsy. Most often, SUDC occurs in otherwise healthy children during sleep. At least 400 children are lost to SUDC in the United States every year.

“This legislation is named ‘Scarlett’s Sunshine’ after a little girl who was lost to Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood,” said **Senator Casey**. “I wanted

to honor Scarlett's memory and make sure that the federal government is taking all possible steps to ensure that no family will have to suffer the death of a child, without knowing why. It's appalling that over 400 children ages 1-4 and over 3,600 infants each year are dying from these unexplained causes. I urge my colleagues to join us in this bipartisan, bicameral effort."

"Wisconsin has the highest rate of Black infant mortality in the nation. Our babies die at rates comparable to war-torn countries like Syria," said **Representative Moore**. "This doesn't have anything to do with good or bad parenting. But because there are no nationwide standards for investigations and data collection, parents are often left wondering what went wrong and what they could have done to prevent their baby from dying. No mother, no matter her background, should have to live with this uncertainty, thinking it was their fault. That's why this bipartisan and bicameral bill to fund critical data collection is a game changer. We need to know the root of the problem to solve it."

"While it is the fifth leading category of death among children ages 1 to 4, SUDC has not been directly addressed in our federal policy in regards to surveillance, research or prevention strategies," said **Laura Gould Crandall**, Executive Director and Co-Founder of the SUDC Foundation. "We can and we must do better. We applaud Senator Casey's and Congresswoman Moore's leadership on behalf of SUDC families worldwide and look forward to working with them to achieve our mission of a future free of SUDC."

"On January 8th, 2017, our lives were shattered when our beautiful, healthy, thriving daughter, Scarlett Lillian Pauley, went to sleep and never woke up. And we do not know why," said **Stephanie Zarecky and Ryan Pauley**. "Losing a child is the single greatest pain we could ever imagine and living without answers magnifies the tragedy exponentially. We try every day to spread Scarlett's Sunshine, allowing her memory to shine on and bring light to SUDC, the medical mystery that took her from us. We thank Senator Casey and Congresswoman Moore for their leadership on Scarlett's Sunshine on Sudden Unexpected Death Act in honor of Scarlett and all of the other children who are deeply loved and missed."

If passed into law, Scarlett's Sunshine Act it will authorize over \$49 million in new federal funding to strengthen efforts to better track, understand and prevent SUDC and SUID. Specifically, it would supply grants to help states and municipalities to improve data collection and death scene investigations related to unexpected infant and child deaths and ensure death reviews are completed for 100 percent of infant and child fatalities. Currently, there are no nationwide standards for investigating and collecting data following an infant or child death. This makes it nearly impossible to determine the causes of these deaths and what strategies our country can implement to prevent these tragedies.

This bill has also been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Hospital Association, Cribs for Kids, First Candle, March of Dimes, Kids in Danger, Within Our Reach and the Aaron Matthew SIDS Guild of

Seattle Children's Hospital.

To learn more and support Scarlett's Sunshine on Sudden Unexpected Death Act, please visit: <https://sudc.org/advocacy/scarletts-sunshine-act>

About the SUDC Foundation:

The SUDC Foundation is the only organization worldwide whose purpose is to promote awareness, advocate for research and support those affected by SUDC. The SUDC Foundation provides all services at no cost to families. Learn more: <https://sudc.org>.

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