

Dear [Lawmaker name]

I am writing to ask for your help in making a brighter future for all those born with heart defects. Yesterday the Congenital Heart Futures Act, a bill 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. I am writing to ask you to co-sponsor this bill 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 1.8 million Americans now living with congenital heart disease.

[2-3 sentences saying why you care – some examples:

From a parent/relative:

My daughter was born with a complex heart defect and underwent three open heart surgeries before she was three. I want to be hopeful for her future, but right now I know there is a severe lack of research, awareness, and resources available to help us help her do well as she gets older. Please help me help my daughter survive to become a healthy, productive parent and grandparent.

From an adult patient:

Since being born in 1956 with a complex heart defect, I have undergone 4 open heart surgeries and am currently on disability due to my heart. I have struggled to get the information and care I need to take care of my rare condition, as doctor after doctor answer my questions with, "we just don't know". The federal government should use my tax dollars to do the research to get those questions answered, so that both today's adults and tomorrow's children get better care.

From a health care provider:

As a doctor taking care of congenital heart patients I struggle to find the information and resources I need to help these patients thrive. These patients face high risks of developing additional heart problems as they age, and we have limited information on best treatment strategies. Many health care providers are unprepared to care for their complex life-long needs. Please help me protect this pioneering and vulnerable population]

To sign on as a co-sponsor of the bill, House Members should contact Dan Farmer at Rep. Space's office at (202) 225-6265 and Senators should contact Sara Singleton at Senator Durbin's office at (202) 224-2152.

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

Sincerely,

[name]

[full mailing address]

[email]