

ROBERT E. LATTA
5TH DISTRICT, OHIO

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MATERIALS

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3505

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1531 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
(202) 225-6405

DISTRICT OFFICES:
1045 NORTH MAIN STREET
SUITE 6
BOWLING GREEN, OH 43402
(419) 354-8700

101 CLINTON STREET
SUITE 1200
DEFIANCE, OH 43512
(419) 782-1996

11 EAST MAIN STREET
NORWALK, OH 44857
(419) 668-0206

Clyde High School
1015 Race Street
Clyde, OH 43410

Dear Clyde High School students,

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns regarding the "cancer cluster" in Clyde, Ohio. I appreciate you taking the time to contact me with your thoughts on this issue, as I know how important it is to you and your classmates.

There is no better investment than in our nation's youth. I have been personally touched by the stories of the brave children in the greater Clyde area who have fought such a vicious disease. Even the tragic stories of the children who have lost their battle to cancer, are a testament to the human spirit, and their love and determination are an inspiration to us all. However, those who have lost their lives, or are still fighting for life, are the reason I believe that funding should be devoted to researching pediatric cancer, so that this terrible disease can one day be eradicated. With advancements in modern medicine, no child deserves to have to fight for his or her life because of pediatric cancer. For these reasons, I assisted in securing \$10 million dollars in H.R. 3293, the Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for pediatric cancer research.

As you know, in the Fifth Congressional District of Ohio, over twenty youth, from infants to young adults, have been afflicted by what has been confirmed by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) as a childhood cancer cluster. It is my understanding that several types of cancer have been found in the affected areas, including forms of brain cancer, Ewing Sarcoma, and Leukemia. Over the past three years, this case has evolved to include the attention of the local Sandusky County Health Department, the ODH, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. I have been in contact with the Ohio Department of Health and they are working daily with local and state partners to find the causes of childhood cancer in this area and the means to prevent future cases.

There has been great interest in pediatric cancer at the federal government level for some time. On July 29, 2008, the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act was signed into law by President Bush. It is a historic bill because it is the first that specifically addresses the unique conditions and needs of children who suffer with pediatric cancer. It was passed in Congress by a vote of 416 to 0 in the House, and by a unanimous vote in the Senate. However, money has yet to be devoted to implement the provisions of the bill. I believe it is time to act on the overwhelming sense

of Congress that the federal budget should address the needs of childhood cancer patients and their families.

This Act authorizes \$30 million annually over five years, providing funding for pediatric cancer clinical trials. The clinical trials would be conducted in over 200 research facilities nationwide by the Children's Oncology Group – the designated pediatric cancer research at the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health. The Act also creates a population-based national childhood cancer research registry and improves public awareness of treatment and research for children with cancer and their families.

Congress is currently working on finalizing appropriation bills to fund the activities of the federal government for Fiscal Year 2010. I assisted in securing \$10 million in the Fiscal Year 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to direct \$10 million in the HHS Office of the Secretary to support the activities authorized by the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act. These funds will allow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to expand and enhance the infrastructure to track the epidemiology of pediatric cancer for a comprehensive nationwide registry of actual occurrence of pediatric cancer. Furthermore, these funds will be targeted towards the enhancement, expansion and intensification of pediatric cancer research.

While this is a start, we must achieve the \$30 million annually that the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act authorizes. I have sent letters to the HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and President Barack Obama urging them to fully fund the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act (Public Law No: 110-285) in their annual budget requests to the Congress in the upcoming years. With cancer as the leading cause of death from disease in children in the United States, it is imperative that well-spent funds are dedicated to the eradication of pediatric cancer. With the advances made in cancer research, we must continue to work towards eradicating this dreadful disease.

Again, I deeply appreciate you contacting me as I know that this issue is of great personal concern to you. It is my great honor to serve as your Member of Congress and it is my number one priority to represent you and the best interests of the Fifth Congressional District. Please do not hesitate to call, write, or e-mail me in the future with any of your concerns or questions. For federal-related issues, you may reach my Washington, D.C. office by phone at (202) 225-6405, or my District office at (800) 541-6446 for constituent services. I encourage you to visit my website at <http://latta.house.gov> where you can sign up for my e-newsletter and text message updates. The website also provides links to my YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr pages, as well as my blog, the Latta Letter, all of which will help bring my work in Washington, D.C. home to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Latta", is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress