



June 1, 2016

Representative Gus Bilirakis
2112 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 2051

Representative Adam Schiff
2112 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Bilirakis and Schiff:

On behalf of the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE), I am pleased to have the opportunity to offer our strong support for the Congenital Heart Futures Act Reauthorization Act of 2015. ASE is an organization of nearly 17,000 professionals committed to excellence in cardiovascular ultrasound and its application to patient care. Cardiovascular ultrasound is critical to the initial diagnosis and ongoing treatment of Congenital Heart Disease (CHD).

We very much appreciate your leadership in introducing this bipartisan legislation, which would affirm the importance of continued CHD research by directing the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to conduct a cohort study examining the CHD epidemiology, authorize a campaign to raise public awareness, and promote biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and long term outcomes of this serious and prevalent condition.

While we have made substantial progress in the treatment of heart disease, we appreciate your recognition that much work still needs to be done in the area of CHD, which remains the leading cause of infant mortality. Nearly 1 in 100 babies are born with CHD, and, while life expectancy of many infants born with heart defects has been extended, there is no cure. Moreover, those children who are accurately diagnosed and treated face life-long risks and potential complications, including heart failure, stroke, renal dysfunction, and neurocognitive problems. The epidemiological studies, research focus, and public awareness campaign required by the Congenital Heart Futures Reauthorization Act are desperately needed.

Again, the ASE very much appreciates your leadership on this issue, and looks forward to working with you to secure passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely yours,

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