

The Christopher & Dana Reeve Paralysis Act (H.R.1727, S.1183)

The *Christopher & Dana Reeve Paralysis Act* (CDRPA) passed the House of Representatives unanimously by voice vote in October of 2007 (H.R. 1727). It has been approved by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, and is subject to a hold in the Senate, awaiting a full vote with 33 cosponsors (S.1183). The CDRPA is non-controversial and has strong bi-partisan support, led by Representatives Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Mary Bono (R-CA), Jim Langevin (D-RI), and Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), and Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA), Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Hillary Clinton (D-NY). Please help us bring the CDRPA to a full vote in the Senate by signing on as a co-sponsor and encouraging your colleagues to do so as well.

The Basics:

This bill is primarily about three things: promoting collaborative scientific research, advancing rehabilitation research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis and mobility impairments from any cause -- stroke, ALS, spinal cord injuries, Multiple Sclerosis and others. The CDRPA encourages coordination of research to prevent redundancies and hasten discovery of better treatments and cures and, as importantly, to improve the daily lives *today* for those living with paralysis.

What Does the Bill Do:

- **Title I Paralysis Research.** The bill expands research on paralysis at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) through Consortia. This style of research promotes collaboration, connecting scientists doing similar work in multiple fields to enrich understanding and speed discovery of better treatments and cures.
- **Title II Paralysis Rehabilitation and Care.** The bill calls for rehabilitation research to advance daily function for people with paralysis including intensive, activity-based research to measure the effectiveness of certain rehabilitative tactics that aim to improve mobility, prevent secondary complications, and develop improved assistive technology.
- **Title III Improving Quality of Life for Persons with Paralysis and Other Physical Disabilities.** The bill will develop unique programs at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) to better the quality of life and long-term health status of persons with paralysis and other physical disabilities. Programs include providing grants to non-profit health and disability organizations to educate the public about paralysis, improve access to services, and integrate life with paralysis into society, as well as coordinate services within each state to assist persons living with paralysis.

Why Now:

- The CDRPA solidifies Christopher and Dana Reeve's vision for the paralysis community, including collaborative scientific research, enhanced rehabilitation research, and improved access to better quality of life programs for people living with paralysis throughout the nation.
- The tenants of the legislation are in-line with the initiatives advanced by this Administration: coordination, collaboration, and a reduction in research redundancies.
- During financially difficult times, the CDRPA advances mechanisms to more efficiently spend current dollars and would support programs proven to reduce health care costs.
- It has been labeled a model bill that enhances ongoing programs with an eye to the future.
- Millions of individuals with paralysis and their families are counting on us, and that list grows daily as more Americans are afflicted with diseases and injuries that cause paralysis, including our nation's soldiers fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Please help us pass this vital piece of paralysis legislation by signing on as a co-sponsor in the Senate. If you are already a cosponsor, thank you for support. We ask that you please encourage your colleagues to sign on and support the bill as well. Passage of this bill will be the realization of the dreams of Christopher & Dana Reeve, and many people living with paralysis and their families and friends for a better quality of life.