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SANDERS-LEAHY CANCER REGISTRIES AMENDMENT ACT PASSES THE SENATE

Rep. Bernard Sanders, I-Vt., today congratulated Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., for winning Senate approval for the Cancer Registries Amendment Act of 1992 as part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) reauthorization bill.

The bill, which was drafted and introduced in the House by Sanders and in the Senate by Leahy, would enable each state to have a cancer registry, thereby creating a nationwide system of registries that would allow researchers for the first time to have a comprehensive database to buttress their work in cancer prevention and control.

"Senator Leahy has done an extraordinary job in shepherding this important legislation through the Senate," Sanders said. "It is extremely impressive and gratifying that only two months after this bill was introduced in Congress that it has now passed the full Senate, with resounding support. I am happy to announce that the bill now has 95 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives -- Democrats as well as Republicans -- and that we intend to push this legislation forward as quickly as possible."

Sanders added, "The success of this Vermont-led legislation could not have happened were it not for the extraordinary efforts of Vermont breast cancer survivors Virginia Soffa and Joanne Rathgeb, working with the Breast Cancer Action Group and the thousands of other concerned Vermonters who have written to the Vermont delegation. Endorsements by the American Cancer Society, the Breast Cancer Coalition, the National Women's Health Network, the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues and Joanne have helped us lead the way toward learning more about breast cancer and cancer in general. This is a giant step for the millions of people across the country who deserve this comprehensive database."

The bill will offer \$30 million each year for five years so that each state can establish or upgrade their cancer registries, which will collect such important data as age, race, occupation, residence, and ethnicity. The registries will also document the stage of the cancer diagnosed and the treatment received. In addition, the bill will launch a study of the exceptionally high rate of breast cancer deaths in Vermont and New England.

"Because the House has already passed the reauthorization bill of NIH, the next step," said Sanders, "is to convince the members of the NIH Conference Committee in the House to accept the Senate's inclusion of the registry bill in their own reauthorization bill. That effort has already begun."

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