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THE PANCREATIC CANCER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACT (H.R. 745) ADDRESSES THE ASTOUNDING MORTALITY OF THE FOURTH LEADING CAUSE OF CANCER DEATH IN THE UNITED STATES

The Bill is the First Substantive Legislation that would provide Comprehensive Pancreatic Cancer Research Initiatives and Programs to Advance Scientific Progress

EL SEGUNDO, CA – (January 29, 2009) – The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, the only national organization creating hope in a comprehensive way through research, patient support, community outreach and advocacy for a cure, applauds U.S. Representatives Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL) for the introduction of the *Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act* which focuses on reducing mortality for pancreatic cancer, the fourth leading cause of cancer death in the United States. This bill is the first substantive legislative effort dedicated to advancing pancreatic cancer research. Once enacted and fully funded it will provide a greater focus on this disease and will provide the National Cancer Institute with the tools it needs to develop the diagnostic methods and treatments that are currently lacking for pancreatic cancer patients.

"A cure starts with dedicated, significant funding for pancreatic cancer research, and the Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act is a critical step towards addressing the urgent needs of the pancreatic cancer research community," stated Julie Fleshman, President and CEO of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. "On behalf of the entire pancreatic cancer community, we thank Reps. Eshoo and Brown-Waite for their continued leadership on this important targeted research initiative and their ongoing support of the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network."

Pancreatic cancer was recently thrust into the national spotlight by actor Patrick Swayze's public battle with the disease and the diagnosis and subsequent passing of Dr. Randy Pausch, the Carnegie Mellon University Professor who became known around the world after delivering his famous 'last lecture.' During his nearly two year battle with the disease, Dr. Pausch advocated on Capitol Hill for increasing federal funding for pancreatic cancer research and to raise awareness about the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's 2008 strategic plan for federal pancreatic cancer research called the *National Plan to Advance Pancreatic Cancer Research*, which formed the basis for the legislation.

"I am honored that my husband's work has continued to have an impact," stated Jai Pausch. "Randy felt passionately about bringing awareness to a disease about which little was known. My hope through this legislation is that pancreatic cancer will no longer be the frightening diagnosis it is today and that patients will have more effective treatment options enabling them to live long, fulfilling lives."

Pancreatic Cancer has the highest mortality among leading cancer killers and has claimed the lives of many public figures, including actor Michael Landon, opera tenor Luciano Pavarotti, famed journalist Dith Pran, former ambassador to Bosnia Dick Sklar, and NFL Players Association President Gene Upshaw.

This year, over 38,000 Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and nearly 34,000 will die. The five year survival rate is less than 5 percent and has remained largely unchanged in the last thirty years, largely because early detection tools and effective treatments have yet to be developed. Despite the sobering statistics, less than 2 percent of the National Cancer Institute's federal research funding is currently allocated to pancreatic cancer.

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network will enlist their network of volunteer advocates to help ensure their U.S. Representatives know *Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act* should be a priority and signed into law. The new bill will be a major focus for the 400 advocates expected at the 3rd Annual Pancreatic Cancer Advocacy Day on March 31, 2009 in Washington, DC. To learn more about the organization and its advocacy efforts visit www.pancan.org.

About the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network is the only national organization creating hope in a comprehensive way through research, patient support, community outreach and advocacy for a cure. The organization raises money for direct private funding of research—and advocates for more aggressive federal research funding of medical breakthroughs in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic cancer.

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network fills the void of information and options by giving patients and caregivers reliable, personalized information they need to make informed decisions. We create a sense of hope and community so no one has to face pancreatic cancer alone. The organization helps support individuals and communities all across the country work together to raise awareness and funds to find a cure for pancreatic cancer.

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