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Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Bipartisan Pediatric Cancer Bills, Increasing Investment in Pediatric Cancer Research

09/16/2021

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed S1431 and S3724, two bipartisan pediatric cancer bills that will increase investments in New Jersey's pediatric cancer research. The legislation (S1431) establishes the "Pediatric Cancer Research Fund" and establishes an advisory board within the New Jersey State Commission on Cancer Research for disbursement of monies deposited in the fund and provides voluntary contributions by taxpayers on gross income tax returns for pediatric cancer research. Additionally, S3724 appropriates \$5 million to the New Jersey Pediatric Cancer Fund.

"There is nothing more important than protecting the health of our children. Investing in pediatric cancer research plays a vital role in the fight against childhood cancers in New Jersey," **said Governor Murphy**. "Establishing the Pediatric Cancer Research Fund allows all New Jerseyans to support innovative, groundbreaking research that will provide life-saving treatments and hope to patients and their families."

Primary sponsors of the legislation include Senate President Steve Sweeney, Senators Pennacchio, Bucco, and Schepisi, and Assemblymembers DeCroce, Vainieri Huttie, Lampitt, Burzichelli, and Verrelli.

"New Jersey has had the nation's third highest rate of pediatric cancer, and cases are increasing every year," **said Senate President Steve Sweeney**. "Cancer is now the leading cause of death by disease for children under 15. That's why the New Jersey Pediatric Cancer Fund is so important. While we may not be able to eradicate pediatric cancer completely, my hope is that this funding will help. It's imperative that we continue to invest in research to develop cures and treatments for the various forms of cancer, and that we improve screening and other preventative measures to avert this debilitating effects of this disease."

"As a survivor of pediatric cancer, I know there are few things that can make a child feel so scared or parents so helpless," **said Senator Anthony M. Bucco**. "I am thankful every day that I was one of the lucky ones who survived. With better-funded research, we can improve treatments and survival rates to ensure that luck is no longer a factor in deciding which children with cancer will have an opportunity to grow up and live full lives."

"The voluntary contributions from New Jerseyans under this bill will provide support for approved scientific research projects that focus on the numerous different causes of cancer," **said Senator Joe Pennacchio**. "This additional funding and support will allow researchers to investigate new cancer treatments and new ways of preventing this insidious disease that has affected millions of people."

"It is truly heartbreaking when a child is diagnosed with cancer. And sadly, like adult cancer rates, pediatric cancer rates continue to rise in New Jersey," **said Senator Holly Schepisi**. "These two bills will encourage all New Jerseyans to open their hearts and donate to help children in need. Together, we can help uncover the causes of childhood cancer, find new and improved treatments, and hopefully find a cure."

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“Medical breakthroughs, and success stories like West Milford’s Aaron Newton, start with cancer research. Through a voluntary check box on a tax return, we can dedicate funds to conquering childhood cancer. This law honors the courage of Aaron, the advocacy of his parents, and gives New Jersey families fighting cancer the hope that a cure will come their way,” **said Assemblywoman BettyLou DeCroce**.

“Any time a child is diagnosed with cancer, they and their loved ones go through an unimaginably painful and difficult experience,” **said Assemblywomen Valerie Vainieri Huttie and Pamela Lampitt**. “Learning more about preventative measures, screening, treatment and even potential cures for pediatric cancer can help ease the suffering of these families and limit the number of people who have to deal with this challenging disease. Making it easier for residents to donate to pediatric cancer research through their tax returns will help garner more ongoing support for these critical efforts going forward.”

“Seeing your child in pain or in danger is every parent’s worst nightmare, which is why pediatric cancer is such a challenging disease for families to face,” **said Assembly Democrats John Burzichelli, Anthony Verrelli, and Valerie Vainieri Huttie**. “Allocating funding to pediatric cancer research can help remove some of that pain and danger by helping us understand how to catch the disease early on, treat it successfully or even prevent it in the first place. It is our hope the research facilitated by this funding will help improve and save the lives of countless children and families throughout our state.”

Governor Phil Murphy

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