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News Release

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March of Dimes Urges Congress to Affirm its' Commitment to the Prevention and Treatment of Birth Defects

Washington, DC, July 26, 2002—On July 26 before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Subcommittee on Children and Families, Dr. Nancy Green, Medical Director of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, urged committee members to reauthorize the Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1998 and provide additional federal resources for prevention and treatment of birth defects.

“Although we at the March of Dimes are justifiably proud of the Foundation’s research program, volunteers and staff of the March of Dimes strongly support federally-funded research related to birth defects and programs that provide services to those living with birth defects,” said Dr. Green.

Dr. Green stated that an especially important federal research project is the National Birth Defects Prevention Study, the largest study on the causes of birth defects ever conducted.

"Now, with information collected on more than 11,000 families, the data are being used in studies designed to help identify the causes of birth defects," Dr. Green told the Committee. "This exciting leading edge research holds great promise and merits an increase in funding."

She continued her testimony by explaining that the Birth Defects Prevention Act should be reauthorized to ensure that prevention and treatment of birth defects remains a federal priority.

"The March of Dimes looks forward to working with Senators Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) and Kit Bond (R-Mo.) as well as other committee members to complete action on this bill before the end of this Congress and thereby maintain the federal commitment to preventing birth defects and ensuring the quality of life for those living with birth defects," said Dr. Green during her testimony.

The March of Dimes is a national voluntary health agency whose mission is to improve the health of children by preventing birth defects and infant mortality. Founded in 1938, the March of Dimes funds programs of research, community services, education, and advocacy. For more information, visit the March of Dimes Web site at www.marchofdimes.com, its Spanish Web site at www.nacersano.org, or call 1-888-MODIMES.

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