



March 16, 2017

**NATIONAL DOWN SYNDROME SOCIETY
ADVOCACY ALERT**

**Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome
Ask your Senators and Representative to join today!**

Established in May 2015, the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome is an expansion of the Congressional Down Syndrome Caucus originally formed in 2008. The Task Force's goal is to educate Members of Congress and their staff about Down syndrome and to promote bipartisan policies that would enhance the quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome. The Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome is championed and led by Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Pete Sessions (R-TX), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Cheri Bustos (D-IL) and Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Robert Casey (D-PA).

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) works with members of the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome in support of its mission to educate members of Congress and their staff about Down syndrome. The Task Force supports legislative activities that improve Down syndrome research, education and treatment and promote public policies that would enhance the quality of life for those with Down syndrome.

Bipartisan leadership in Congress has resulted in significant achievements for the Down syndrome community and disability community at large. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act (ABLE) all stand as evidence to what can be done when Members work with each other to enact legislation that seeks to empower individuals with disabilities. Because of these laws, a generation of people with Down syndrome have had more opportunities to succeed and be an active part of our communities than the generation before them.

Invite your Representative and Senators to join the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome today. To find your Member of Congress, please [click here](#).

To find out if your Members of Congress are members of the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome, please visit the [Task Force webpage](#) on the NDSS website.

For your convenience, below is a sample pre-written message that you may use when emailing or calling your Representative and Senators. Adding a personal story or reference to your loved one with Down syndrome is always a positive addition to our request. Thanking your member on social media is also encouraged. Please use the hashtag #DSTaskForce.

Sample message:

As your constituent and a person touched by Down syndrome, I ask you to join the bipartisan, bilateral Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome. This Task Force is championed and led by Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Pete Sessions (R-TX), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Cheri Bustos (D-IL) and Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Robert Casey (D-PA).

The purpose of the Task Force is to provide a forum in which Members of Congress and their staff can actively engage in a dialogue to improve the quality of life for people with Down syndrome and their families. The Task Force is central to helping raise awareness of Down syndrome on Capitol Hill and promoting public policies that would enhance the quality of life for those with Down syndrome.

Down syndrome occurs when an individual is born with a full or partial extra copy of the 21st chromosome. This additional genetic material alters the course of development and causes an increased risk for certain medical conditions such as congenital heart defects, respiratory and hearing problems, Alzheimer's disease, childhood leukemia and thyroid conditions. People with Down syndrome also experience cognitive delays and intellectual disability. Down syndrome, which occurs in people of all races and economic levels, is the most commonly occurring chromosomal condition, affecting approximately one in every 700 babies born in the United States each year.

The mission of the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome is multifold and includes building awareness of the issues important to those with Down syndrome, such as medical care, education, job opportunities and independent living. The Task Force also promotes medical research and bipartisan cooperation.

To join the Congressional Task Force on Down Syndrome, please contact Megan Perez (megan.perez@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers' office or Kyle Christian (Kyle_Christian@moran.senate.gov) with Sen. Jerry Moran's office.

Thank you.

INSERT YOUR SIGNATURE INCLUDING ADDRESS, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE