

JDRF and the Federal Government: A Model Public Private Partnership
Senator Joe Lieberman
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AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Good morning. I want to welcome our witnesses to this hearing as part of this fifth Children's Congress organized by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Sen. Collins has chaired four similar that focused on the impact of juvenile diabetes in children, recent breakthroughs in research, the partnership between the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) and the NIH and the challenges in developing effective treatments and a cure for this disease.

In honor of her leadership on this issue, I am turning the gavel over to her and I look forward to her opening statement.

(Collins finishes calls on Senator).

Thank you Senator Collins for holding this hearing and for your leadership on this issue and, again, I'd like to thank the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation for organizing this Children's Congress and arranging for our witnesses to be with us today.

I also want to give a special welcome to Caroline McEnery from my home state of Connecticut, who will share her story with us today, and also her fellow Nutmeggers Aiden Falla, Amanda Rossi and Sedrick Trotman who I look forward to meeting with after this hearing.

Before the discovery of insulin, a diagnosis of Type I diabetes – or Children's Diabetes – was a death sentence.

But in the winter of 1921, following months of experiments and tests, Canadian doctor Frederick Banting and a team of researchers announced they had successfully lowered the blood sugar in diabetic dogs with their new breakthrough insulin therapy.

The news flashed around the world, bringing hope to millions, who were otherwise condemned to a slow, lingering death, and in an extraordinary display of compassion the research team walked away from the fortune their discovery would have earned them – selling the production rights to insulin for a mere dollar.

As so often seems to happen in science, the idea that led to the discovery of insulin occurred to Dr. Banting as he was getting ready for bed following a long day's work on a completely unrelated piece of research.

The soon-to-be Nobel Prize winner scribbled the idea in his notebook and then went to sleep. Later he would say: "No one has ever had an idea in a dress suit."

Since the discovery of insulin, we've made steady progress that has made it easier for people with diabetes to manage their condition with things like quick- and long-acting insulin inhalers, insulin pumps and better technologies to monitor blood glucose levels.

But both the cause and cure of for Children's Diabetes still remains out of reach. Still, I think of Dr. Banting's late-night revelation and I'm filled with the hope that at this very moment, out there somewhere are researchers on the verge of their own flash of intuition that will lead us to discover the cause and a cure for juvenile diabetes.

And that's why it is important to support the work of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. The numbers speak for themselves.

Nearly 21 million Americans suffer from diabetes and about 1.5 million new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year. Approximately one in every 400 to 600 children and adolescents have Type I diabetes and every year, about 13,000 American children are diagnosed with Type I diabetes – about 35 children every day, or more than one child every hour.

Over the past 30-plus years, JDRF has provided more than \$1 billion to juvenile diabetes research in a quest for a cure and to better manage the diseases complications.

With funding support from the JDRF-NIH joint federal-private partnership, significant insights have been gained into the underlying mechanisms of this disease and promising therapies to prevent and treat it and its complications are being tested.

This research has resulted in reducing the rates of diabetes kidney disease through enhanced prevention efforts, led to the development of new technologies enabling continuous blood glucose monitoring, and supported collaborative research and clinical study efforts.

Despite the tremendous progress that has been made, there is a clear need to better coordinate our research efforts in all of our scientific disciplines and across both the public and private sectors. To accomplish this, I am getting ready to re-introduce the CURES legislative proposal that I first introduced in 2005.

CURES is focused on providing the NIH with new, enhanced tools to speed up research into treatments for diseases like diabetes, cancer and AIDS by pulling together researchers and scientists in both the public and private sectors over all the scientific disciplines – and then connecting them with industries that have the knowledge to convert ideas into products.

I will be working with medical foundations and researchers as I re-draft this bill, which I plan to reintroduce later this year. I hope that the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) and I can work together on this effort.

We know that someday, somewhere another medical researcher will have that late-night revelation that may lead us to cures for things like juvenile diabetes. By

passing legislation to robustly support research and innovation, I believe we can move that idea from scribbles in a laboratory notebook to life-saving medicines and therapies for so many diseases with all the speed our compassion demands.

Thank you.