

**Testimony of Caroline Jacobs**

**Age 14, JDRF Children's Congress Delegate  
from Shapleigh, Maine**

**At the Hearing entitled:**

**“Transforming Lives Through Diabetes Research”**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2011, 1:30 p.m.**

**Before the**

**Senate Committee on**

**Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building**

**Washington, D.C.**

Good Afternoon, Chairwoman Collins and Members of the Committee. Thank you for asking me to testify before you today.

My name is Caroline Jacobs, and I am 14 years old. I am from the great state of Maine, where we say Maine is the way life should be.

I am here as a Children's Congress delegate to talk about living with diabetes, the importance of technology for me and other kids with diabetes, and my hope for a cure.

I was diagnosed with diabetes when I was 10 years old; it changed my life forever. With this disease, I must always think and be aware of how I am feeling and I have had to grow up fast. I feel the burden on my family and my friends who are always worrying about me – always asking me questions about my blood sugar.

So, I am doing what I can to make a difference in finding a cure for juvenile diabetes. I brought a *School Walk for a Cure* to my school, and this year is the 3rd year for my family's walk team for the Walk for a Cure in Portland. I also make jewelry and bags to benefit JDRF. I do all of these things so we can continue research to find a cure for diabetes.

While we wait for a cure, I hope to see that more technologies are made available for kids like me. One of the delegates here is from Canada and has the kind of insulin pump/continuous glucose monitoring system that protects against episodes of hypoglycemia when the patient is ignoring the dropping sugar levels.

With its ability to stop insulin delivery when it detects a low blood sugar, this pump could lighten the burden and the worry for me and those around me. This technology is approved in Canada and other countries, but not here in the United States. It is hard for me to understand how a device like that can be available in a place just over the border from me.

Because I will be driving in the next two years, it would be important for me to have access to a technology that could help prevent my blood from dropping. Having diabetes can make your blood glucose levels go too high or too low and can make me feel sleepy or dizzy, confused or have blurred vision making it too dangerous to drive.

I would like Congress to encourage the FDA to move forward on next steps relating to the artificial pancreas, a combination of a continuous glucose monitor and an insulin pump with software that communicates between the two. The device will prevent highs and lows, especially at night when lows can be most dangerous, but it also would keep control of my sugars while I am driving as well. I hope we will not have to wait too long for this device.

That way, I will no longer have to worry about others always worrying about me. More importantly, my family will feel less of the burden, and my friends won't always have to adjust around me because of this disease.

And I hope this means that I will have the opportunity to travel freely without worrying about this disease, and enjoy the world and those who live on it. After all, isn't that the way life should be?

Thank you, Members of the Committee, especially my home state senator, Senator Collins.