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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

May 18, 2004

Mr. Paul Tubiana
PO Box 21832
Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania 18002-1832

Dear Mr. Tubiana:

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns about the distinction between Type I and Type II diabetes and sharing your personal experiences as a diabetic. I appreciate hearing from you and having the benefit of your views.

As you may know, juvenile diabetes (Type I) is currently believed to affect seven to ten percent of the more than 16 million Americans with diabetes and is very costly, in terms of both health care expenditures and human suffering. I believe biomedical research is our strongest tool in the prevention and treatment of this disease. I recognize the vital role the National Institutes of Health (NIH) play in supporting biomedical research and development at leading research institutions nationwide. This public/private research partnership has allowed the United States to maintain its position as the world leader in medical technology.

I have been a strong supporter of federal funding for basic and clinical research within the NIH. Because research for serious diseases such as juvenile diabetes should be enhanced, I supported Senator Connie Mack's Sense of the Senate Amendment to the Fiscal Year (FY) 1998 Budget Resolution. Over a period of five years, the Mack Resolution doubles the funding for biomedical research through the NIH. You will be pleased to know that the Mack Resolution was adopted to the FY1998 Budget Resolution, which was subsequently passed by the Senate on May 23, 1997.

Most recently, I supported the Omnibus spending bill, which included the FY2004 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education appropriations bill. This legislation contains a \$862 million increase in funding for the NIH, setting total NIH funding at \$28 billion. In addition, the FY2005 budget proposal, which President Bush submitted to Congress, contains an increase of \$764 million, which would bring total annual NIH funding to \$28.8 billion.

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You may be interested to know that the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) is a research institute within the NIH, which conducts and supports nationwide research on diabetes, endocrine disorders, digestive diseases, and urology and renal diseases. The Omnibus spending bill provides \$1.82 billion for the NIDDK for FY2004, an increase of \$100 million from the FY2003 funding level. President Bush has requested \$1.87 billion for the NIDDK in his FY 2005 budget proposal, which would be an additional increase of \$55 million.

In addition, I am an original member of the bipartisan Senate Diabetes Caucus, formed to lend a congressional hand in the fight against this devastating disease. I have also served as an honorary co-chair for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (JDF) International Children's Congress.

Although Congress has increased research funding, I believe we can do more, and I am committed to improving the lives of people living with diabetes or at risk for the disease. I continue to meet regularly with groups and individuals affected by diabetes to hear first hand how we can win the fight against this disease. Thank you again for contacting me. If I can assist you with other matters, please feel free to call on me again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Santorum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rick Santorum
United States Senate

RJS:rxh