

June 26, 2003

To our Board of Directors, Corporate Partners, Volunteers, Friends and Family of JDRC,

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you this evening.

This week, Zoe and I participated in a life-changing event that we shall treasure in our hearts forever....Children's Congress 2003

I would love to share with you every event's details, but it would take all evening.

Instead, I would like to share a few of the most special glimpses of our trip.

Saturday morning started out like most of my outbound flights from Bakersfield. A cancelled flight. I must have "Please cancel and re-route flight schedule" written on my forehead when I walk into airports. We started our day with a cancelled flight, change of airlines, re-routing through Chicago, and a late arrival in DC, but instead of being irritated, daddy reminded Zoe and I to have fun and make friends while we crossed our nation. So we did. We had an enjoyable room-service meal at 11:00 pm and got excited for the next three days.

DC had rained for days prior to us getting there, but California brought the sunshine for our Walk for Cure, right through the center of DC. We walked with hundreds of others, including Chris Dudley, Sugar Ray Leonard, Jerry Stackhouse and Peter Van Etten, to raise funds for a cure. It was a beautiful day. On the walk, Zoe found a friend from North Dakota, three-year old Betsy Seaver. They became inseparable.

Monday brought us one of the most emotionally big moments of our trip. Zoe and Betsy proudly stood among 188 US delegates, along with the 7 international delegates to sing "Promise to Remember Me" on the lawn of the Capitol led by Steve Wariner, Country Western singer and Grammy Winner. Steve's daughter, Holly joined him on stage. Holly has diabetes and Steve has written and produced a song especially for her, Holly's Story. Hundreds of people gathered with us, including Dianne DeGette and George Nethercutt, congressional co-chairs of the Diabetes Caucus, to hear the message our kids brought to our nation. There wasn't a dry eye in the audience.

Tuesday was our focus on Congress day, as all of the 188 delegates and parents joined at a Senate hearing with Senator Susan Collins and eight fellow senators to hear testimonies from Mary Tyler-Moore, six of the children, Ann Siedel, transplant recipient, and lead doctors. Again, not a dry eye. And, those tears were met with great sentiment from the senators, especially Senator Lauttenberg, who also cried with us. We then met with our representative, Bill Thomas. His staff met us with open arms. They were so happy to see us. We were treated like royalty as we were personally escorted in the subway to the Capitol office. We were not shy as we asked for support of the Pancreatic Islet Cell Transplantation Act of 2003. Mr. Thomas has a heart for our kids and promised to help

as much as possible. He also said that if we needed help in getting a pediatric endocrinologist in our city, he would give whatever push he has to get us one!

That evening, we celebrated at dinner with Ms. Moore, Rik Bonness, BD, Medtronic Minimed, Delta Airlines, Speaker of the House, _____, and the entire delegate family. We cried, we sang, and we danced for the hope we have in finding a cure.

The message I bring to you from DC is one of HOPE. We are so close to finding a cure. Please don't give up, persevere, for our breakthrough is near. There is great hope in the Edmonton Protocol for islet cell transplantation, there is hope in the other research being done, there is hope in the funding levels of NIH, and there is hope in the special attention being given to the young victims of this tragic disease.

Zoe brought her own message to Capitol Hill. Her exact words were "Sometimes when I take my blood sugar I'm low and sometimes I'm high. But someday when we find a cure, I won't have diabetes forever." In God's time, I have true faith that the cure will be found. Zoe and her friends will lead normal, healthy lives, uncomplicated by diabetes.

Last but not least, I would like to say a special thank you to LouAnn Durrett for making this possible. LouAnn was Zoe's advocate including writing a recommendation, to helping get the word out about her trip. She also made arrangements on behalf of our chapter to have an exchange gift for her to hand out. Zoe became known as the Frisbee Girl. (Show Frisbee). We have extras and if you would like one, they will be in the back. Thank you LouAnn. Your efforts are met with our sincerest gratitude.

Sincerely,
Tamarah L. Harber