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John C. Lewin, M.D.

March 12, 2009

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
309 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the 37,000 members of the American College of Cardiology (ACC), I am writing to express our support of the "Congenital Heart Futures Act."

This legislation will be of great benefit to congenital heart disease patients, who represent nearly one percent of all live births each year. There are approximately 800,000 children and 1 million adults living in the United States with congenital heart disease who require acute, specialized care. Thanks to medical advances, this population has increased by an estimated five percent a year.

In order to better serve this population, increased awareness and public education need to be brought to the disease. The Congenital Heart Futures Act provides funding to educate not only the public but also healthcare practitioners so they may better diagnose and treat these patients.

The Congenital Heart Futures Act also addresses the need for a data registry for this underserved patient population. The Congenital Heart Disease Registry will collect and store data to track demographics, risk factors, causation of the disease, treatment approaches, and outcome measurements that will greatly benefit both the patients and the cardiovascular specialists who manage the treatment and prevention of congenital heart disease. The ACC has long promoted the use of data registries to promote better outcomes within the cardiovascular community and stands in strong support of this critical endeavor.

In addition, the ACC is supportive of the creation of an Advisory Committee on Congenital Heart Disease and of the importance of the Congenital Heart Futures Act's in pursuing improved care for this underserved patient community.

I offer the ACC and its staff as a resource for the promotion and enactment of the Congenital Heart Futures Act. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Patrick Hope at [phope@acc.org](mailto:phope@acc.org) or (202) 375-9912.

Respectfully,

W. Douglas Weaver  
President, American College of Cardiology

*The mission of the American College of Cardiology Foundation is to advocate for quality cardiovascular care — through education, research promotion, development and application of standards and guidelines — and to influence health care policy.*

