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Roseville family goes to Capitol Hill for childhood cancer bill

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A Roseville family urged Congress this week to support landmark legislation that would provide \$30 million a year through 2013 for childhood cancer research.

Robyn Raphael, founder and executive director of the Keaton Raphael Memorial Foundation based in Roseville, was on Capitol Hill today as part of CureSearch's "Reach the Day" event. More than 400 families, physicians, caregivers and other supporters rallied support for bill H.R. 1553, known as the "Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Child Cancer Act of 2008."

The bill -- named in honor of longtime childhood cancer champion Rep. Deborah Pryce, R-Ohio, whose daughter died at age 9 of neuroblastoma -- passed the House unanimously June 12. The Senate is expected to vote on the legislation this summer.

"This bill has been a labor of love for several families and myself, researchers and the childhood cancer community," Raphael said in a telephone interview from Washington, D.C. She explained how she worked for the past 10 years to better-fund childhood cancer research after the death in 1998 of her 5-year-old son, Keaton, who also had neuroblastoma, an aggressive cancer of the nervous system that usually strikes before age 6 and has a 10 percent survival rate.

If the bill becomes law, its benefits would include a childhood cancer database to help researchers identify genetic causes of pediatric cancer and develop prevention strategies.

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