



Senator Feinstein Urges Purchase of Breast Cancer Research Stamp in Recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October 17, 2006

San Francisco – *U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today called on Californians to make a special effort to purchase Breast Cancer Research Stamps during the month of October, in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.*

For the past two decades, Breast Cancer Awareness Month has been a time to raise awareness about the disease and to alert women and men to the importance of early detection, our best tool in the fight against breast cancer.

“October has been designated as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. During this time, I encourage everyone to make a special effort to purchase the Breast Cancer Research Stamp. Until a cure is found, the money from the sale of this unique postal stamp will continue to focus public awareness on this devastating disease and provide hope to breast cancer survivors.

So far, the Breast Cancer Research Stamp has been an incredible success. Almost 720 million stamps have been sold since the stamp’s inception in 1998, helping to generate more than \$50 million for breast cancer research!

Too many Americans and their families have been touched by this terrible disease. In fact, in every major ethnic group in this country, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women, aside from skin cancer. Over two million women in the U.S. are living with breast cancer, one million of whom have yet to be diagnosed.

But today, a growing number of people today are becoming cancer survivors, rather than cancer victims, thanks to breakthroughs in cancer research. So, get out there and buy more Breast Cancer Research stamps and help show our strong commitment to funding a cure for breast cancer.”

Background on the Breast Cancer Research Stamp

Legislation to create the Breast Cancer Research Stamp was signed into law by President Bill Clinton on August 13, 1997. The stamp has been reauthorized by Congress four times, and is currently authorized to run through the end of 2007 by a provision sponsored by Senators Feinstein and Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-Texas).

The original sponsors for the original bill were Senators Feinstein, Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), and Lauch Faircloth (R-NC) in the Senate, and Representatives Vic Fazio (D-CA) and Susan Molinari (R-NY) in the House.

The stamp costs 45 cents and is deemed valid as a 39-cent stamp. The additional 6 cents charged for each stamp is directed to research programs at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which receives 70 percent of the proceeds, and the Department of Defense breast cancer research programs, which receives the remaining 30 percent of the proceeds.

Since the creation of the stamp in 1998, NIH has received approximately \$35 million, and the Defense Department about \$15 million. These funds have generated important advances in breast cancer research. For example:

- Dr. Jenny Freeman and her colleagues used a 2002 Department of Defense Concept Award to develop Medical Hyperspectral Imaging (MHSI) technology. This method of imaging helps surgeons determine if they have removed all cancerous tissue during breast cancer surgery.
- Dr. Dennis Sgroi of Massachusetts General Hospital is looking at the levels of expression of certain genes in breast cancer as a way of identifying whether patients will respond to treatment with Tamoxifen. If genes suggest a patient will not respond, other therapies can be tried much more quickly. This work is funded in part with a Department of Defense FY'02 Breast Cancer Research Program Exploration Award.

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