

May 3, 2007

The Honorable
United States House of Representatives
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative

As your constituent and as someone concerned by lupus, I am writing to respectfully request that you cosponsor H.R. 1192, the *Lupus Research, Education, Awareness, Communication, and Healthcare (REACH) Amendments of 2007* introduced by Representative Kendrick Meek. H.R. 1192 will strengthen the nation's research efforts to identify the causes and cure of lupus, improve lupus data collection and epidemiology, and enhance public and health professional awareness and understanding of lupus – one of the nation's most devastating, yet least understood and least known autoimmune diseases.

Lupus is a widespread, chronic, and life-threatening autoimmune disease that can damage virtually any organ system in the body. Approximately 1.5 million Americans have lupus and, of particular concern, is the unexplained prevalence of lupus among women and minority populations—the disease affects nine times more women than men, and it is two to three times more common among African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. Unbelievably, there has been no new drug approved by the FDA to treat lupus in more than 40 years.

H.R. 1192 will help our nation to make significant strides toward bridging the gaps in lupus research, education, and awareness. Through the comprehensive approach promoted by the *Lupus REACH Amendments*, health professionals and researchers will be able to significantly enhance the lives of those affected by this disease.

Lupus is a disease that can be disabling and necessitates a coordinated national response to ensure that we are doing everything we can to identify the causes, improve the care, and find a cure. Please join this bipartisan effort and cosponsor H.R. 1192.

To become a cosponsor of the *Lupus REACH Amendments*, please have your staff contact Robert Miller in Representative Meek's office at 202-225-4506. Please let me know if you will cosponsor this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,