

## **Stillbirth and SUID Prevention, Education, and Awareness Act**

The Stillbirth and SUID Prevention, Education, and Awareness Act would improve the collection of critical data to determine the causes of stillbirth and Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID), increase education and awareness about how to prevent these tragedies in the future, and expand support services for families who have experienced a stillbirth or SUID loss.

Every year, there are more than 25,000 stillbirths in the United States. Many of these deaths are the result of birth defects, infections, umbilical cord problems, and chronic conditions of the mother. However, there is no known cause for as many as half of all stillbirths, leaving many parents without answers to the reasons for these deaths. This bill would expand current activities related to stillbirth and increase education and awareness among health care providers and families. Specifically, it would:

- Expand current data collection activities to additional states to identify the causes of stillbirth and ways to prevent it in the future.
- Create a public awareness and education campaign to educate women about the risk factors for still birth and the importance of prenatal care.
- Expand support services, such as grief counseling, for families who have experienced a stillbirth loss.

In addition, there are more than 4,600 sudden unexpected infant deaths each year and another 200 children between the ages 1 and 4 die without any obvious cause for their death. Many such tragedies could be prevented if there were a better understanding of the reasons why these infants and children died. The Act encourages states to complete scene investigations to better understand why these children died and establishes a national database to track these deaths and identify risk factors to prevent them in the future. Specifically, it would:

- Encourage states to complete scene investigations and autopsies to help determine causes of death and collect uniform data.
- Provide funding to train state and local personnel on completing scene investigations.
- Expand successful child death review programs to review the circumstances surrounding infant's and children's deaths in their community.
- Establish a national database to track these deaths and identify risk factors to prevent them in the future.
- Create a national public awareness and education campaign to educate parents and caregivers about known risk factors.
- Expand support services, such as grief counseling, for families who have experienced the loss of a child.

Senator Lautenberg (D-NJ) will be introducing the Stillbirth and SUID Prevention, Education, and Awareness Act in the coming weeks. If you would like more information on the bill, please contact Apryl Clark at 224-3224.