

RE: Senate Bill #850

Dear Representative _____,

As one of your voting constituents, I am writing to respectfully request that you support current Lupus funding by overturning Senate Bill # 850 that was passed on May 5th. The decision to pass Senate Bill # 850 cut all funding for lupus' special initiative line item. This decision will weaken the Lupus Foundation's efforts to enhance public and health professional awareness and understanding of lupus. State funding helps our branch offices to serve outlying counties and communities with limited resources and knowledge of lupus. Please keep in mind that lupus is one of the nation's most devastating and least understood autoimmune diseases, making it more imperative that we maintain funding for our outreach programs.

Lupus is a widespread, chronic, and life-threatening autoimmune disease that can damage almost every organ system in the body. **Approximately 66,000 Pennsylvanians are affected by lupus** and, of particular concern, is the unexplained prevalence of lupus among women and minority population; 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 have been no new drugs approved by the FDA specifically for lupus in nearly 40 years.

Lupus is a disease that is disabling and cruel, and necessitates a coordinated 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 vote to overturn Senate Bill #850.

I respectfully thank you for the support you have shown in the past and for considering my current urgent request. I hope that you understand the magnitude of the Senate's decision to pass this bill see that their actions are corrected.

Sincerely,