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Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act (HR 3067) gets bipartisan support

By Tony Schinella

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U.S. Rep. Charles Bass, R-N.H., has co-sponsored a bill that creates a new commission that advocates hope will streamline current research efforts and create a pipeline in order to ensure that the most effective and promising research opportunities receive existing private and federal funding.

At a press conference on Oct. 11, Bass said he had been debating and working on the legislation along with Nancy Ryan, the president of the New Hampshire Breast Cancer Coalition, for a number of years. He and U.S. Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., put together the legislation and are working on gathering more sponsors. He said his own mother passed away from the disease when he was in college, at the age of 51. Bass said he was proud to be working on the issue with others in and outside of Congress.

"This is really a bipartisan issue," he said. "Cancer does not discriminate."

The legislation will find ways to bring all interests together at a 10-member panel that are involved in the various fields, including biomedical research and advocacy. The commission would perform a vital oversight process, he said, while adding no new money. The act will dissolve in 2020, Bass said.

"I would like to see it passed by the end of the year," Bass said.

Ryan said she was "honored and excited" about the bill and the commission would help many organizations reach the goal of eliminating the disease by 2020. She said she was a 22-year survivor of the disease, acknowledging that three mammograms missed her disease. Ryan thanked Bass for being a key supporter of funding who had worked with her and others for many years on the issue.

"These advances were initiated by the National Breast Cancer Coalition, but without members of Congress like Congressman Bass, they would have not succeeded," she said.

Joining Bass and Ryan at the press conference were a number of state legislators, including former Speaker of the House, Rep. Gene Chandler, R-Bartlett.