

RACE for Children Act seeks to boost childhood cancer research

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The bipartisan Research to Accelerate Cures and Equity (RACE) for Children Act, introduced in both the House and Senate last week, would make important strides towards developing cancer drugs for children by updating the Pediatric Research Equity Act (PREA) to include childhood cancer.

“We’ve come a long way in the battle against childhood cancer, but we need the RACE for Children Act to beat this disease,” U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy (R-WI) said. “Our laws must be brought into the twenty-first century so that our nation’s children can benefit from cutting-edge research and development.”



PREA currently permits pharmaceutical companies to receive waivers from research obligations for the development of children’s cancer drugs, since pediatric cancers usually arise in different organs than adult cancers. In cases in which childhood and adult cancers share the same molecular targets, however, recent research advances may benefit both patient groups.

“Researchers have made tremendous strides in fighting cancer in adults, using ‘molecular targeting’ to precisely attack cancer cells,” U.S. Rep. Michael T. McCaul (R-TX) said. “However, current law does not reflect such advances in cancer drug development because these therapies have been under-studied in pediatric cancer. As the founder of the Childhood Cancer Caucus, I am pleased to re-introduce the RACE for Children Act because it will modernize current law to require pediatric studies for the most promising and innovative cancer treatments. I look forward to continuing the good fight with my colleagues and the advocacy community to give hope to the approximately 15,000 children and adolescents diagnosed with cancer each year.”