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September 16, 2026
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Congressional Sickle Cell Disease Caucus to Host Briefing on Emergency Department Care During Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Congressional Sickle Cell Disease Caucus will host a congressional briefing focused on improving emergency department care for people living with sickle cell disease (SCD), their caregivers, and clinical professionals. Held in recognition of Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month, this event will feature a panel discussion led by the bipartisan caucus co-chairs, Representatives Glenn Ivey (MD-04) and Rich McCormick (GA-07).

The briefing, titled **Reimaging Emergency Care for Sickle Cell Disease**, will take place **Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM EST in the Rayburn House Office Building - Room 2075**. “When Sickle Cell Warriors go to the emergency room, they often face challenges receiving the timely and acute care they need,” said Congressman Ivey. “The Sickle Cell Disease Caucus is dedicated to supporting Warriors and their families, while ensuring healthcare professionals understand the urgency of treating sickle cell pain crises. No one living with sickle cell disease should have their pain dismissed or face unnecessary obstacles to needed care. These crises need to be taken seriously, and the treatment Sickle Cell Warriors receive in the emergency room must reflect that.” This conversation will engage a broad network of stakeholders, including patient advocates, healthcare providers, researchers, industry partners, and community leaders.

Sickle cell disease is a lifelong inherited blood disorder that can cause severe pain and other potentially serious complications. For many individuals living with SCD, the emergency department is an important point of access to urgent care. However, patients and providers continue to face challenges, including delays in receiving appropriate pain treatment, gaps in disease-specific knowledge, and inconsistencies in care. “Sickle cell disease affects thousands of American families, and those living with it deserve care that recognizes the severity and complexity of this lifelong condition,” said Congressman McCormick. “As an emergency room physician, I understand how important rapid, appropriate treatment is during a sickle cell pain crisis. Through the Sickle Cell Disease Caucus, we are working to improve awareness, strengthen care, and ensure patients have access to the treatment and support they need.” This

congressional briefing will highlight patient experiences and clinical perspectives while exploring practical approaches to strengthening emergency department care.

In addition to caucus leadership, other briefing participants will include:

- Dr. Kelly Davidson, Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology and Oncology at the University of Virginia
- Dr. Sophie Lanzkron, Professor of Medicine and Division Director of Hematology at Thomas Jefferson University
- Mr. Cory Lewis, Patient Advocate
- Ms. Nikia Vaughan, Executive Director of the Maryland Sickle Cell Disease Association

For more information about the Sickle Cell Disease Caucus and to register for the briefing, visit https://sickcells.org/sickle-cell-disease-caucus/.

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The **Sickle Cell Disease Caucus**, led by Rep. Glenn Ivey (MD-04) and Rep. Rich McCormick (GA-07), is a bipartisan congressional platform designed to advance federal policy, funding, research, and education related to sickle cell disease (SCD). Additionally, the caucus serves as a credible, bipartisan forum to elevate the needs of Americans living with SCD and those who support the community through care, innovation, and coverage. The SCD Caucus is a central vehicle for congressional education, member engagement, and coordination with federal agencies and external stakeholders.