

**Testimony of Charlie Albair**

**Age 10, JDRF 2017 Children's Congress Delegate**

**From Gray, Maine**

**At the Hearing entitled:**

**"Progress Toward a Cure for Type 1 Diabetes: Research and the Artificial Pancreas"**

**Wednesday, July 26, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.**

**Before the**

**United States Senate Special Committee on Aging**

**Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 106**

**Washington, D.C.**

Chairman Collins, Ranking Member Casey, Senators – thank you for inviting me to speak before you today.

My name is Charlie Albair from Gray, Maine. I am 10-years-old, and will be entering the 5th grade at Gray New Gloucester Middle School.

I am just like a lot of other kids. I love sports, especially basketball and baseball. And when I grow up, I hope to play in the Major Leagues – for the Boston Red Sox.

The one big difference is that I have type 1 diabetes or T1D.

I was diagnosed with T1D way back when I was six-years-old. I was in the first grade. I started not feeling like myself. I kept asking the teacher to go to the bathroom because I really, really had to. She got angry at me because she thought I just was trying to skip class.

She felt bad when she found out the real reason.

At first I was kind of confused when I was diagnosed. I didn't know what it was; "diabetes" was a big word for a first-grader.

In the beginning, we treated my diabetes with syringes. And a half a year later, I got the Omnipod pump and then a CGM to monitor my sugar levels.

I love it.

I don't have to be constantly stabbing myself with a needle – like five or 10 times a day.

What does this mean for me?

When I first found out I had diabetes, I remember thinking that this would change my whole life. I thought that I wouldn't realize my dream of being a sports star.

Now I can realize I can do whatever I want.

Sometimes my Omnipod or CGM beeps in class, and the other kids say, "Charlie, stop making noise." I just tell them that that's my natural "robot" noise.

The pump and CGM are so much a part of me. But I do wish that they didn't have to be.

I want my disease to go away – for me and all the other kids who suffer from it. I want us all to be able to live without thinking about it.

That's why I am here.

We need money for research.

We need money so scientists can invent new pumps and monitors better than what we have now – and so they can come up with a cure for T1D.

You have supported kids like me for so many years, and all I ask is that you continue to do so. And if you do, I will invite you to a game when I am on the Red Sox.

Thank you.