

Testimony of Angie Platt

Chair, JDRF 2017 Children's Congress

Encino, California

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 with you today.

I am Angie Platt from Encino, California. My husband Jon and I have three children, all boys – twin 4 year olds and meet our oldest son Jonathan who is 14 years old.

It's hard for me to believe that the 6'5" young man sitting next to me is the same boy who was here for JDRF's 2011 Children's Congress. He was only 7 years old at the time, just two years into his diagnosis.

If you watch him play in his competitive basketball tournaments, it would be very hard to believe that he is a child living with type 1 diabetes.

I am here today to tell you and your colleagues that Jonathan is living proof that your leadership and actions have made a real difference in our lives and the lives of all people with T1D.

In 2011, the T1D community asked you for help, and Senators, you gave it. The Special Diabetes Program has provided hundreds of millions of dollars of crucial funding for a range of therapies and investigations – including the artificial pancreas.

In April 2016, Jonathan was enrolled in the pediatric trial for the Medtronic Hybrid Closed Loop 670G – otherwise known as the “artificial pancreas.” We felt as if we won the lottery.

This device has given Jonathan better blood sugar control than he has ever had – and it gives our family some desperately needed peace of mind. In the past, we would wake up at minimum 3 times a night to check my son's blood sugar. Jonathan used to have to stop practicing with his team or even sit out in a game because his blood sugars were too erratic. Now, he gets to play right through crunch time.

As you know, last fall the FDA approved this artificial pancreas system.

Senators, let me be clear: this would not have happened without your support of the Special Diabetes Program.

Diabetes is relentless. We work so hard, we are so responsible, we are playing by all the rules. Jonathan is on the latest most advanced technology. Jonathan is doing everything right.

But the ugly reality of diabetes is that as hard as we work, our kids are still vulnerable. This past June at Jonathan's eye exam it was discovered that Jonathan has three dot hemorrhages. Quite frankly, there are kids who are a lot worse off than Jonathan. Those of us here are among the lucky ones.

I know that we have made progress; my son is wearing the first artificial pancreas system approved in the world! But this disease doesn't stop, so neither can we.

We need the next generation devices that can fully automate insulin delivery.

We need to ensure that progress continues in the area of diabetes complication treatments.

We also need to prevent others from ever developing T1D – including my twin sons, Jonathan's brothers, who are at a higher risk of developing it. They are enrolled in TrialNet, an SDP-funded prevention program.

SDP has done so much, but it will expire on September 30th. The SDP gives me so much hope, but it needs a hero. We need you and your Senate colleagues to renew it for another three years so researchers can continue their great work.

Senators, I want to thank you for all that you have done to make my family's life and the lives of all of us here today better. Senator Collins, I particularly want to thank you for your steadfast commitment and outstanding leadership to advance type 1 diabetes research and to help people gain access to new technologies. You have been a champion for us for a long time.

Look at Jonathan – he will not lose to diabetes.

We will fight alongside Jonathan.

We will fight for all of these kids.

I ask you to continue to fight along with us.

Thank you.