

Chairman Boxer, Ranking Member Inhofe and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Chairman Boxer, thank you for your continued leadership and actions to protect our nation's children.

While the Committee examines the role of the Environmental Protection Agency and children's health, I'd like to bring your attention to a community in Palm Beach Florida called the Acreage.

This town of about 50,000 has been shaken by fears of a cancer cluster. In February, a study by the state health department found higher than normal incidences of brain and central nervous system cancer in girls and young women. Some residents have lost a loved one; others aren't sure if their homes are safe to live in; and if they try to leave, they worry they won't even be able to sell their homes.

Despite a year-long investigation, we still don't know what's causing these cancers and people cannot get their lives back to normal until they have answers. Last summer I asked the EPA and Centers for Disease Control to get involved and help the state and local health department in its investigation.

The Federal government should take a larger and more proactive role in these complex and highly technical investigations because it has the expertise to lend a hand with detailed and sophisticated analysis.

EPA's mission is to protect human health and the environment. In order to fulfill that role and to help communities like the Acreage that are desperate for answers, the first step would be bringing the EPA and various agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services together to lay out a plan for what a federal role should be in the investigation of cancer clusters.

I also believe the agencies, led by EPA and HHS, should prepare rapid response teams that will advise and assist not only the state and local

health departments but help with communicating what's going on to the community . Here's why we need to act, and we need to do it immediately.

Jenna McCann died just 2 months before her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, because of a rare, aggressive form of brain cancer. It wasn't until a few years later that her family learned of 2 other young girls with the same type of rare brain cancer who also lived in the Acreage.

Her mother, Kaye McCann wrote to me, "How can a cancer that is so rare ... affect 3 children living within just a few miles of each other in just a few years time? I don't know what the answer is, but I know this area needs help."

Another mother, Jennifer Dunsford, was in the hospital waiting room while her 5-year-old son had to undergo brain surgery and she started talking with another family in the waiting room. As it turned out, they also live in the Acreage. Their daughter had just had surgery because she also had brain cancer.

Later that same year, Jennifer found out there were 2 more children who lived in the Acreage who were diagnosed with brain cancer.

She was the resident in the Acreage who initiated the request for a study and who has even gone on the Dr. Oz show to tell people about what's happening in Florida and the need for more testing and for immediate help to find answers.

There are more stories like this, and with the consent of the Chairman, I'd like to enter them into the hearing record.

Hearing stories like these are heartbreaking and we've got to do something about it. I look forward to working with you on this.