

# Lance Announces Lymphedema Treatment Act

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*Constituent Advocate Inspires Action*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**--- Congressman Leonard Lance (NJ-07) today announced the introduction of the Lymphedema Treatment Act. Lance is an original cosponsor of the bipartisan legislation that seeks to close the Medicare coverage gap for equipment and therapies needed by the nearly six million Americans afflicted with the disease. Lymphedema results from damaged lymph nodes that can result in painful swelling. Compression therapy is an essential component of treatment but many of these compression supplies are not covered by Medicare.

**“Our legislation offers a chance to utilize the equipment needed for care,”**said Lance, a member of the House Health Subcommittee and co-chairman of the House Rare Disease Caucus. **“Those born with this terrible disease and cancer patients need access to compression equipment to treat the condition effectively. I thank Mrs. Lisa Bibbo for her advocacy and leading this effort as we take another step in bridging the gap between proper diagnosis and access to treatment. I also praise the work of the all members of the Lymphedema Advocacy Group who have been tireless advocates for patients and their loved ones.”**

Mrs. Bibbo, a constituent of Lance’s from Kenilworth, New Jersey, offered praise for the legislative initiative. “I am the mother of a child who suffers from a severe form of primary lymphedema who required microsurgery outside of this country to control its life threatening and debilitating effects. It is of paramount concern to enact the Lymphedema Treatment Act which would provide millions of Americans with the appropriate conservative therapy which incredibly is all that is available in the US at this time for this incurable chronic condition. The Lymphedema Treatment Act will improve patient management, prevent life threatening complications and reduce healthcare costs.”

Ensuring Medicare covers the supplies needed for treatment would be a major victory for those fighting the disease. Heather Ferguson, founder and executive director of the Lymphedema Advocacy Group added, “Compression therapy is a cornerstone of lymphedema treatment, without which patients are unable to effectively manage their condition. This often leads to disease progression, comorbidities and costly complications that could have been avoided. By allowing coverage for compression supplies, this bill is pivotal in improving patient care while reducing the overall healthcare costs associated with this chronic disease.”

The goals of the Rare Disease Caucus are to bring Congressional attention to the nearly 7,000 known rare diseases that currently have no approved therapies, ensure sufficient funding for research and orphan product development, explore ways to incentivize companies to create new drugs, biologics and humanitarian use devices, and provide an opportunity for Members of Congress, families and advocacy groups to exchange ideas and policy concerns. Rare and neglected diseases afflict nearly 30 million Americans, approximately half of whom are children. Congressman Dave Reichert (WA-08) lead the bipartisan team in the policy development of the Lymphedema Treatment Act.