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Rep. Kelly, Lurie Children's, Illinois PIRG, Kids In Danger Host Press Conference Celebrating Passage of Reese's Law

Rep. Kelly's bipartisan consumer protection legislation was recently passed into law to create safety standards that prevent accidental ingestion of button batteries by children ages six and younger.

CHICAGO, IL – Today, Congresswoman Robin Kelly (IL-02) hosted a press conference at Lurie Children's with Reese's Purpose, Illinois Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) and Kids In Danger (KID) to celebrate passage of Rep. Kelly's bipartisan legislation, Reese's Law. The legislation directs the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to develop and implement new safety standards to protect children from ingesting button cell batteries. *Reese's Law* is named for Reese Hamsmith, an 18-month-old child who tragically passed away after ingesting a button cell battery.

"I introduced *Reese's Law* in Congress because the Hamsmith's loss was not only moving, but preventable," **said Congresswoman Kelly**. "Button and coin cell batteries are in so many of the products in our homes, and they are especially prevalent in children's toys and remote controls. 3,500 button battery ingestions happen each year. More than 2,800 children are treated in ERs across the country each year, and there was a 93% increase in ingestions of button batteries between March and September of 2020. It's clear that we need to do more to protect children from these batteries, and I am so proud that *Reese's Law* will do just that."

"I'm grateful to the House and Senate for their diligent work to pass *Reese's Law*. This legislation will undoubtedly save lives. I often talk about the plaque that was in Reese's hospital room which read, 'He has a plan and I have a purpose.' Reese's life was taken way too soon, but her legacy will live on through this law, so that no other family will have to suffer like ours," **said Trista Hamsmith, Founder of Reese's Purpose and mother of Reese Hamsmith**. "We are thankful for the passage of this legislation to help protect all children and families from the hidden dangers of accidental button battery ingestion. We know *Reese's Law* is only one part of the solution. Education and early diagnosis are also part of the process in saving lives. We look forward to continuing to work towards a comprehensive solution to help keep kids safe."

"Button and coin cell batteries are hidden hazards in the home. Reese's Law will now make batteries -- in their original packaging or in use in products -- safer for all children," **said Nancy Cowles, Executive Director of Kids In Danger (KID)** a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by fighting for product safety. "Now the work falls to the Consumer Product Safety Commission to follow the law and develop a strong standard to protect children."

"Let's hope not one more child dies because of getting access to a tiny battery," **said Abe Scarr, Director of Illinois PIRG Education Fund.** "It's devastating that it took one family's tragedy to focus attention on this hidden danger. We are grateful to the Hamsmith family, Congresswoman Kelly, and others who worked tirelessly to get this law passed."

The legislation was brought to Rep. Kelly's attention by Reese's mother, Trista Hamsmith following Reese's death. Trista founded [Reese's Purpose](#), a non-profit organization to identify, advocate and correct safety issues impacting children and their families.

Button and coin batteries pose a dangerous risk to young children and infants, but products with these batteries lack proper safety standards. Swallowing button batteries can cause serious injuries for some children, especially if the battery becomes lodged in the esophagus. Burns and complications can continue even after the batteries have been removed, resulting in esophageal holes, fistulas, long-term damage and death.

Reese's Law requires the Consumer Product Safety Commission to:

- Create performance standards requiring the compartments of a consumer product containing button cell or coin batteries to be secured in order to prevent access by children who are six years of age or younger;
- Require warning labels in literature accompanying the product, on the packaging, and directly on the product when practical so it is visible;
- Require warning labels to clearly identify the hazard of ingestion;
- Require warning labels that instruct consumers to keep new and used batteries out of the reach of children, and to seek immediate medical attention if a battery is ingested.

This legislation is endorsed by: Hallmark, the Toy Association, The American Academy of Pediatrics, Consumer Reports, Reese's Purpose, Kids In Danger (KID), U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) and the Consumer Federation of America.

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