

Tauscher, Wasserman Schultz and Wolf introduce "National Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Month"

Washington

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The resolution draws attention to the dangers and costs of fatal and near drowning incidents in the United States and encourages parents, caregivers, supervisors, and others to be aware of hazards near swimming and water recreational facilities.

Drowning

is a serious problem in the U.S. More than one in four drowning victims are children 14 and younger and, in 2005, 30 percent of children aged one to 4 years old who died did so from drowning. Although drowning rates have slowly declined, it is the second leading cause of death for children ages one to 14 years old, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

“It is crucial to educate and promote awareness about the causes of drowning and aquatic injuries because they are preventable,” Rep. Ellen Tauscher said. “By designating May as ‘National Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Month,’ we are taking a positive step toward combating water related injuries and fatalities, especially as we move into the summer months.”

The resolution focuses on incorporating “layers of protection,” which is consistent with water safety awareness programs developed by aquatic professionals. This resolution compliments the efforts of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, which Congress passed in 2008, by highlighting the importance of awareness and education. The VGB Act provides incentives for states to adopt comprehensive pool safety laws to protect children from life-threatening injuries and deaths from pool and spa drains.

“Pools are meant to be fun places, but they also can be very dangerous,” Rep. Frank Wolf said. “Anything we can do to heighten awareness and educate parents about hidden dangers is a good thing. As a parent and grandparent, I want to do everything I can to ensure that time at the pool is a positive experience. No one wants there to be a tragic accident.”

“The tragedy of hundreds of children dying each year from accidental drowning is made even more painful by the knowledge that these types of accidents are preventable,” said Rep. Wasserman Schultz. “Education and awareness of the hazards associated with children near swimming and water recreational facilities can help prevent hundreds of children from becoming drowning victims.”

The resolution has drawn broad support from the Drowning Prevention Foundation, Safe Kids Worldwide, the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals, the World Waterpark Association, the National Recreation and Park Association, and the Florida Swimming Pool Association.