Testimony by

Ruby Whitmore

Breakthrough T1D 2025 Children's Congress Delegate

From Old Town, Maine

At the Hearing entitled:

"A Future Without Type 1 Diabetes: Accelerating Breakthroughs and Creating Hope"

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Before the

United States Senate

Committee on Appropriations

Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 106

Washington, D.C.

Good morning, Chairwoman Collins, Senator Shaheen, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Committee.

My name is Ruby Whitmore, and I'm a 16-year-old student from Old Town, Maine. I'm honored to speak with you today not just as someone living with type 1 diabetes, but as a student, an athlete, a volunteer, and someone who dreams of becoming a trauma surgeon.

Diabetes runs in my family, so it wasn't a total surprise when one summer, my parents noticed the signs and took me straight to the doctor. I was just five years old. Now, more than ten years later, I can say I've learned how to manage the disease — but it's also changed my life in ways that most people never see.

PAUSE

Managing type 1 diabetes isn't something I ever get to take a break from. Even when everything is going well, it's always there — like an extra layer I have to think about that others don't.

Playing sports makes it even more complicated. I've had to learn through experience how to balance my blood sugar before a game or during a race, and there have been times when I've had to sit out or treat a low in the middle of practice.

It's frustrating sometimes, because I don't want to worry about numbers, carbs, or whether my sensor is still reading correctly. But being open about those challenges has helped me take control of them. It's made me stronger, and more confident in who I am.

PAUSE

Despite the challenges, I've never let diabetes define what I can or can't do. I play soccer on both my school and travel teams. I run track. I serve as my school's Best Buddies chapter president. I even had the opportunity to volunteer at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center, working with patients in both general care and neurosurgery.

My goal is to become a doctor, a trauma surgeon, because I want to help people the way my care team, especially my endocrinologist Corey Webb, helped me. He made a lasting impact on my life, and I hope one day I can do the same for someone else.

I volunteer, in part, because T1D has given me perspective and empathy for those in need, who also face extraordinary challenges, often without the support and resources that my family and friends have provided.

PAUSE

I want to take a moment to talk about my family. My dad also has type 1 diabetes, so I’ve grown up knowing what it looks like. This has put a great deal of stress on my mom, who is always there for us.

She’s the one quietly making sure I’m okay — reminding me to bring sugar tablets, staying up when I sleep through my pump alarms, and just being there, every day. Even though I think of myself as independent, I know I wouldn’t be the person I am without her support. She's the reason I’ve felt safe enough to be confident in living with this disease.

The burden placed on families dealing with type 1 is often invisible, and often overlooked.

PAUSE

I’ve been lucky to have access to the latest diabetes technology, like continuous glucose monitors and advanced insulin pumps, which have made it possible for me to live a full, active life. Advancements like these have been made possible by the Special Diabetes Program.

I want to thank you for the recent extension of the (SDP), because it supports groundbreaking research and brings us closer to better treatments — and one day, a cure.

PAUSE

I never want a young girl to think she can’t play sports because of her insulin pump. I never want a family to skip doses or ration supplies because of cost. Everyone living with type 1 diabetes deserves the chance to thrive.

Your support makes that possible.

Thank you for your time — and for investing in a healthier, better future for people like me.