

WASHINGTON- Today the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the Poison Center Support, Enhancement and Awareness Act of 2008, HR 5669. Congressman Lee Terry (R-NE) is an original co-sponsor of this important bill. This legislation provides the funding needed to reauthorize the poison center national toll-free number, national media campaign, and state grant program to provide assistance for poison prevention. The Poison Center in Omaha is the designated center for Nebraska, Wyoming, American Samoa, and Federated States of Micronesia.

"This legislation saves lives. Last year Poison Control centers in the U.S. responded to 4 million calls. These centers are a critical component of the public health system and provide urgent medical advice to the communities they serve," said Congressman Terry.

Poisoning is the second leading form of unintentional death in the United States and an estimated sixty percent of those exposures are experienced by children under the age of six. Calls received by the poison control centers addressed chemical, biological and nuclear exposure, as well as adverse reactions to pesticides, cleaning products and other hazardous products.

This bill not only saves lives, but also saves millions of dollars in unnecessary costs. A report by the Institute of Medicine concluded that the Nation's Poison Control Centers yielded \$7 in savings for every \$1 invested. In 2005 alone, Poison Control Centers saved federal health programs an estimated \$525 million.

