

WASHINGTON - Legislation backed by Rep. Lee Terry, R-Neb. to create a nationwide registry for those with Lou Gehrig's disease is headed to President Bush for his signature.

Terry introduced the measure with Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y. The idea is to gather information that will advance research on amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Gehrig, the New York Yankees first baseman, died of the disease in 1941 at age 37.

According to the ALS Association, about 5,600 people in the United States are diagnosed with the progressive neurodegenerative disease every year. There is no cure for the disease, which affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord.

Another bill that Terry co-authored, to provide continued funding for poison control centers, received final congressional approval this week.

The 61 centers across the country are staffed 24 hours a day by people trained to assess poison risks, recommend treatment or refer callers to appropriate medical facilities. The \$230 million bill would authorize federal spending on national poison control efforts through 2014.

