



# Rep. Tom Emmer on Emmer Recognizes Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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**\*\*REP. TOM EMMER:**

\*\* Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind us of the importance of the month of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Like any disease that affects people regardless of race, color, creed or their status in society, cancer not only tests the mental and physical strength of the person fighting the disease, it has a deep and lasting impact on families, friends and communities. Nearly more than 100 different types of cancer exist, but in my humble opinion, none is more wicked than breast cancer. This is most likely because breast cancer is one of the most common and deadly cancers among women. In fact, one in eight women in America will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. Breast cancer can be a cruel disease. It tears mothers from their children, wives from their husbands and daughters from their parents. In 2015, it's anticipated that in our country alone, more than 40,000 women will die from breast cancer. While women are most at risk, we must remember that this disease does not just affect women. While less common, in the United States, 2,350 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. In the past 20 years, there have been incredible advancements in the research and medicine surrounding breast cancer, but there is much yet to be done. We can't rest until we can prevent or cure this horrible disease. Again, we have already made huge strides in the fight against breast cancer. Death rates due to breast cancer have been declining since 1989, and women younger than 50 are now less likely to get breast cancer than ever before. This is largely due to the awareness that has been raised on the importance of self-exams and yearly doctor physicals. However, currently, 29% of insured women are still not receiving mammograms, and for women without health insurance, the percentage is even higher, with 68% not receiving mammograms. It is extremely important that we continue to place an emphasis on early detection so that we can catch this disease as early as possible and have the best shot at beating it. While there are factors like genetics and age that can make someone more susceptible to the disease, breast cancer does not discriminate against education, upbringing, or wealth. From CEOs in New York City to a stay-at-home mom in small-town Minnesota, this disease knows no bounds. I expect that just about everyone who walks these halls, and too many to count across our country, have been impacted by breast cancer in some way. I'm no exception. Fifteen years ago, I lost my sister Bridget to breast cancer. Bridget was only 38 years old when she left us. She left behind two beautiful daughters and a husband who loved her. And while her life was a lesson on how to get the most out of each second of every minute of every hour and every day, there is not a day that goes by when I don't wish there could have been a cure for her. For those who have experienced personal loss and pain from breast cancer, and for everyone who are fighting this disease, we join with you this month, not only to raise awareness about breast cancer, but to sound a call to action to strengthen our resolve to eradicate this disease once and for all. In Congress, we can absolutely play a role in this effort. To the extent possible within our constitutional authority, we can and should encourage further advancement of medical research. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of the Executive Committee of the Breast Cancer Act of 2015, which will establish a commission to work to defeat this disease. The commission will consist of experts in cancer research who will work to identify opportunities and ideas to advance our quest to prevent and cure breast cancer for future generations. October is a month to raise awareness. We have made progress, and we are



making progress in our fight against this unforgiving disease. Let us use this month to rededicate ourselves to our shared goal of eradicating breast cancer once and for all. Thank you, and I yield back.

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