Catherine Dupont

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Good Evening Mayor Maher, Vice Mayor Benzan and members of the City Council

My family supports the motion submitted by Mayor Maher and Vice Mayor Benzan declaring October as Dwarfism Awareness Month in the City of Cambridge. We have been advocating for Dwarfism Awareness for many years.

Twelve years ago today my daughter gave birth to the most precious little boy Charles Joseph (CJ). At that time we did not know how precious he really was and would be in the future.

Two weeks later our world came crushing down when we were told by his Pediatrician that our baby boy had a form of Dwarfism known as Achondroplasia. we had no idea what it was or how this could have happened and I/my daughter blamed it on herself.

As the years went by we learned more and more about Dwarfism, but we also learned that some people can be very insincere and disrespectful.

As CJ grew up and started school he had to deal with a lot, to the point of being so bullied that he wanted to kill himself and that he was hospitalized, and that just broke our hearts and we knew that we had to do more.

In 2013, we held a Fundraiser for CJ in order to get him a lifetime membership to Little People of America (LPA) so that he could meet other people just like him, and receive the support and services he needs from people like him. CJ met one special friend Julie at his fundraiser, Julie is also a little person, Julie is one of 3 Little People who ran the 2013 and the 2014 Boston Marathon and she finished the Marathon in 2014

The fundraiser was a success, and we wanted to have a fundraiser every year to help other people who have Dwarfism and donate the money to LPA for someone who could not afford the membership.

CJ is a very energetic and outgoing young man, and does not let his Dwarfism get in his way. CJ is very popular, no matter where we go in the city someone knows him. He plays baseball with the East Cambridge Little Baseball League and also plays basketball with Area Four. CJ has received many awards for his outgoing sportsmanship.

Just a few facts about Dwarfism:

1. There are over 200 distinct forms of dwarfism and skeletal dysplasias.
2. People with dwarfism are generally not taller than 4' 10" at adult height. The typical height range is 2'8" to 4'5".
3. Eighty percent of people with dwarfism have average-height parents and siblings.
4. There are an estimated 30,000 people in the United States and 651,000 internationally with a type of dwarfism.

5. In July 2009 the word "midget" was declared inappropriate and offensive. Preferable terms are: having dwarfism, short stature, little person, But most of all the person's given name is always the most preferred.
6. LPA has registered a complaint with the FCC over the use of the "m" word. Our goal is to raise awareness around the offensive impact of the word in order to eliminate its use in media, popular culture and in everyday language.
7. LPA has over 6500 members across the United States and includes 70 chapters active in all 50 states.
8. Skeletal Dysplasias affect bone growth, but generally do not affect cognitive abilities.
9. LPA hosts an annual national conference each July which draws 2500 attendees for a week of activities, including educational and medical workshops, sports, and social networking and events. And in July of 2016 the conference will be held here in Boston

The National Dwarfism Awareness Month program is dedicated to increasing public knowledge about people with dwarfism. If you would like to learn more about Little People of America or Dwarfism please visit their web page at laponline.org

And we ask that everyone wear a Green Ribbon in support of National Dwarfism Awareness Month. If you would like a green ribbon , Please see myself or my daughter, we also have some small business cards and literature with some information on Dwarfism

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We want to Thank everyone for their support, and for making CJ's 12th Birthday a memorable one for him and our family, especially Mayor Maher, Vice Mayor Benzan and the members of the City Council for making this day happen and for recognizing Little People of America and Dwarfism Awareness.

Little People of America

LITTLE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

October is National Dwarfism Awareness Month

October has been declared National Dwarfism Awareness Month. Little People of America (LPA) is a national support organization for people with dwarfism and their families. LPA provides peer, parent and medical support for the dwarfism community.

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For more information about National Dwarfism Awareness Month, please visit www.lpaonline.org or call 1-888-LPA-2001. Events supporting National Dwarfism Awareness Month will be occurring across the U.S. throughout the month of October.

Your Local Contact is: _____

Contact Information: _____