

Christopher and Dana gave this movement visibility. They made everybody have to stop and look and think about what we should be doing to make sure that we pass this act named in Chris's honor, and also to respect the need to find cures for every form of paralysis. I am so pleased to join all of you here today and to pledge my support for this movement and this continuing effort. .

Here's what we have to do. We have to pledge ourselves that we will do everything possible to pass the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Act. And in doing so we will give hope to you and so many millions more who couldn't be here today. We also need to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health and Centers for Disease Control. Last year under this Administration and this Congress, the National Institutes of Health received their first budget cut since 1970. This year's proposed budget decreases that budget even more, and it will further slow the development of life-saving cures and treatments.

In addition, the budget reduces funding for the CDC's paralysis program, which funds the Christopher & Dana Reeve Paralysis Resource Center; the Neuro Recovery Network and Quality of Life Health Promotion Grants to non-profit organizations around the country would be eliminated. I want to thank Senator Harkin and Senator Specter because they led an effort in the Senate to increase the budget that would go to these important health programs. We've got to make sure it is passed and signed into law.

And finally, we need to move forward on stem cell research. Anyone who ever talked with Christopher remembers his strong belief in stem cell research, and the potential that such research held not only for his own benefit but for the millions of Americans who could lead lives with less disability or no disability if we pursue this research and we enable people to have the opportunities that Chris and Dana tried so hard to provide.

I am honored to be with you, to join you in this Rally, and to join you in this cause and movement. As with all movements it will take time and effort, but I am confident that we will see success. We will carry on in the name of two great human beings who inspired every one of us to do more and believe more than we could alone. Let's do it for Christopher and Dana.