



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jenn Lawson
(703) 548-0019

Washington Redskins Players, Kidney Disease Patients, Advocates Unveil National Petition Calling on Congress for Additional Kidney Care Support

– Kidney Disease Affects More than 26 Million Americans and is On the Rise; Redskins Players and Patients Share Their Personal Stories, Explain Why Better Education and Quality of Care Measures are Needed; Over 70,000 Sign Nationwide Petition –

WASHINGTON (June 19, 2008) – At a briefing on Capitol Hill today, Washington Redskins tight end Chris Cooley (#47), offensive lineman Randy Thomas (#77), running back Rock Cartwright (#31) and safety Reed Doughty (#37) were joined by kidney disease patients, family members and caregivers to unveil a national petition of more than 70,000 signatures urging Congress to enact important patient education measures and quality-oriented Medicare program reforms this year to help improve kidney disease prevention and treatment. The petition was coordinated by Kidney Care Partners (KCP) – an alliance of patient advocates, dialysis professionals, care providers and manufacturers working together to improve quality of care for individuals with kidney disease and kidney failure.

“Kidney disease has reached a point of urgency in communities across the nation, and we are calling on Congress to deliver much-needed information to patients and better access to care to help address this growing health crisis,” said Dr. Ed Jones, a practicing nephrologist and Chairman of KCP. “More than 400,000 patients now have kidney failure, and these patients could have been better prepared for managing their condition – even potentially delaying the need for dialysis – had they had access to important kidney disease education and care resources earlier.”

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) impacts more than 26 million Americans nationwide, and most are not aware that they have it. Another 20 million are at increased risk for developing kidney disease, and common CKD risk factors such as diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity continue to drive its rates higher across the nation and worldwide. When left untreated, CKD will progress to end stage renal disease (ESRD), commonly known as kidney failure. ESRD is an irreversible condition which is fatal without a kidney transplant or lifesaving dialysis treatments.

The kidney community endorses vital legislation—the Kidney Care Quality and Education Act—which would improve patient education, kidney care quality and kidney disease prevention initiatives, as well as create a



much-needed annual update for dialysis care. The community applauds the efforts of the Senate for proposing Medicare legislation that includes these critical reforms.

“I am proud to be united with the 70,000 concerned patients, doctors and others who signed this petition, and who are raising their voices today on behalf of the millions of people living with kidney disease in our country,” said Redskin player Reed Doughty. “It is disheartening that a disease affecting so many people doesn’t receive more attention – and I hope that our collaboration on this petition to Congress will help change that.”

The KCP community petition generated the more than 70,000 signatures from supporters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. With the rising incidence of kidney disease, and the number of individuals with kidney failure expected to double in the next ten years, the KCP petition calls for Congress to pass important CKD Medicare program improvements including quality-oriented changes and awareness building initiatives, including:

- Programs to educate the public and at-risk communities about the dangers and warning signs of kidney disease
- Pre-dialysis education for individuals with kidney disease to help slow progression of CKD and its complications and prepare for treatment after kidney failure
- Program reforms to maintain patient access to high quality care by providing annual inflation adjustments for dialysis like those for all other Medicare providers

“The most effective way to slow the rapidly growing incidence of kidney disease in America is through early detection and education,” added Jones. “We encourage lawmakers to recognize this public health crisis and take decisive action during this legislative session.”

###

About Kidney Care Partners

Kidney Care Partners is an alliance of patient advocates, dialysis professionals, providers and manufacturers working together to improve the quality of care for individuals with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).