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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High Profile Minnesotans Speak up for Eating Disorders

Minnesota experts and advocates to lobby Congress on issues facing those with eating disorders

Saint Paul, MN - May 12, 2015 -- For the first time in over a decade, eating disorders legislation will be introduced with bipartisan support at the Eating Disorder Coalition Lobby Day on May 13 in Washington DC. The Anna Westin Act of 2015 is designed to help the estimated 14.5 million people experiencing eating disorders by addressing the three T's: Training, Treatment and Truth in Advertising. The Emily Program, a Minnesota-based eating disorder treatment program, and The Emily Program Foundation, the non-profit arm dedicated to outreach and advocacy in the prevention of eating disorders lead efforts to gain support for Anna's Law.

The Emily Program and The Emily Program Foundation have been leaders in advocacy work since Anna Westin's death in 2000. The Emily Program's Chief Strategy Officer Dr. Jillian Lampert along with the Foundation's Executive Director Billie Gray and Board Member Kitty Westin will attend Lobby Day to generate awareness and momentum in providing access to care for people with eating disorders.

According to the Eating Disorder Coalition, today, eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses – at least one person dies every hour as a direct result of complications from an eating disorder. "Since the death of my daughter Anna from an eating disorder, my life mission has been to prevent even one more person from being denied needed care," said Westin. Rep. Ted Deutch and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen recently introduced the Anna Westin Act of 2015 to address issues around early identification of the illness, treatment, and contributing factors of the illness.

The introduction of the legislation will kick off with a Congressional Briefing featuring the Olympian Brittany Viola, 2012 USA Olympic Diver and daughter of Frank Viola, Minnesota Twin's 1987 World Series pitcher and MVP. Other speakers will include remarks from Rep. Deutch and Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, Kitty Westin, Minnesota-native and mother of Anna Westin, and other eating disorder specialists.

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To learn more, or to schedule an interview, contact Keri Clifton at The Emily Program, 651-379-6134 or keri.clifton@emilyprogram.com.