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January 28, 2004

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Congressman Praised For Getting \$250,000 For North Jersey Cancer Support Center

New York, NY - Joined in their shared efforts to fight cancer, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) visited Katie Couric last week on the set of NBC's "Today" show where the news anchor congratulated him on his work to help Gilda's Club Worldwide, a cancer support group. Rothman received the "Public Vision Award" from the organization for his work in securing \$250,000 in federal funds for the expansion of its Hackensack facility known as a Clubhouse. Couric is very well known for her work to raise colon cancer awareness.

"It meant a great deal to me to have Katie Couric, who is an extraordinary leader in fighting cancer and helping those afflicted and affected by cancer, congratulate me on my work to support Gilda's Club," Rothman said. "I was privileged to help deliver federal funds to Gilda's Club of Northern New Jersey so that their outstanding volunteers and professionals can continue to provide services to the men, women, and children who have come to rely on their knowledge, generosity, and compassion."

The mission of Gilda's Club is to provide a meeting place where men, women, and children living with cancer and their families and friends can join with others to build emotional and social support as a supplement to medical care. Free of charge and nonprofit, Gilda's Club offers networking groups, lectures, workshops, and social events in a nonresidential, homelike setting. As word spreads of its outstanding services, the number of people looking to be a part of Gilda's Club has grown steadily. With the \$250,000 in federal funds Rothman secured as part of the Fiscal Year 2003 budget, the Hackensack Clubhouse was able to expand its children's services and hold more meetings and activities for all age groups. Rothman also recently fought and helped secure with U.S. Senators Jon Corzine (D-NJ) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) an additional \$500,000 for the organization.

"This year alone, 18,000 New Jerseyans will die from cancer," Rothman said. "As scientists continue to search for a cure, we are truly blessed to have an organization like Gilda's Club in Northern New Jersey providing people with cancer and their loved ones with the emotional and social support they need to fight this disease."

Gilda's Club is named in honor of Gilda Radner, who, when describing the emotional and social support she received when she had cancer, called for such places to be made available for people with cancer and their families and friends everywhere. Radner, who was a cast member of NBC's "Saturday Night Live," died in 1989.

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