

WASHINGTON (April 4) – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) visited Easter Seals Pediatric Therapy Services in Pelham and met with 11 year old Caroline Long of Alabaster, the 2012 National Child Ambassador of Easter Seals on Wednesday, April 4.

The following article on the visit appeared in the April 4 online edition of the Shelby County Reporter.□

Spencer Bachus visits Easter Seals

By NEAL WAGNER / City Editor

U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus, R-Alabama, praised Pelham’s Easter Seals Pediatric Therapy Services during an April 4 visit, and said he is in support of a local family working to produce a shopping cart for special-needs children.

Bachus toured the Pediatric Therapy Services building off U.S. 31 in Pelham and learned more about the nonprofit organization, which offers occupational, physical and speech-language therapy to children with disabilities.

During the tour, Bachus met with Easter Seals therapists and officials and learned about the organization’s programs. He said there is an “overwhelming need” for the services Easter Seals offers.

“I know Easter Seals does great work,” Bachus said. “I wanted to come learn about Easter Seals and have an opportunity to see what they are doing for people here. Children who overcome challenges develop some wonderful skills, and they touch your heart.”

Bachus met with Easter Seals speech pathologist Kandis Harris, physical therapist Stasia Tapley and other employees at the Pelham office. Harris showed Bachus a Dynabox Maestro device used to help children with speech-related disabilities, and Tapley explained the

importance of early physical therapy for children born with disabilities.

“If you know a child is born with a genetic anomaly, even if they don’t look delayed, it’s better to start therapy early,” Tapley said.

Bachus also met Alabaster resident Caroline Long, and her parents Drew Ann and David. Caroline Long, who has Rett syndrome, recently was named Easter Seals’ national child spokesperson.

The longs have been working for years to develop a shopping cart for special-needs children. Drew Ann Long told Bachus the family recently worked out a deal with a Birmingham company to manufacture the carts.

After they are assembled in Birmingham, the carts will be shipped to a Georgia distribution company to be sent to retailers across the country.

“This is a marvelous new opportunity for she (Caroline) and her mother to shop together,” Bachus said, noting he was “in support” of the project. “She is the first (Easter Seals) child ambassador from Alabama, so she is representing all children with disabilities. She is a unique little girl.”

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