Oct 27, 2026, 6:30 PM
(17 hours ago)

Dear T1D Community,

Six months ago, Breakthrough T1D ("BT1D") violated their commitment to T1D patients and donors by unilaterally seizing full operating control and eliminated the independent CEO and Board of the T1D Fund with no discussion with the Fund management team or Fund Board. By their own admission, the independently run T1D Fund was one of the most capital-efficient and effective vehicles working toward a cure for T1D. This action not only showed the organizations' complete lack of respect and appreciation for long-time donors and volunteers, but it also derailed progress on what we all care about most, finding a cure for Type1. CEO Aaron Kowalski is accountable for execution of this takeover and it's fallout and we call on him to be removed from the organization.

Consider the following:

- BT1D has still not been transparent about what really transpired by disclosing the 5th, 6th and 7th amendments (the governing documents for the T1D Fund).
- A third-party investigation into BT1D's actions has been requested repeatedly by members of our community. Aaron Kowalski and the BT1D Board refused to grant what we believe should be a requirement for a publicly regulated charity,
- The $8 billion Helmsley Charitable Trust, the largest private contributor to T1D causes worldwide, publicly severed ties with BT1D and said it will not work with BT1D until Aaron Kowalski and the Board members behind the action are replaced.
- Tens of millions of dollars donated and pledged to the Fund have either been returned, redirected to other T1D related charities, or canceled.
- BT1D does not appear to be a well-run organization. It has an extraordinarily large expense base of $93 million of salaries, wages and benefits: spent before any donor money goes to cures. Also nearly half of the BT1D Executive Leadership Giving team has left the organization since May.
- The BT1D Board has brought in COO's, CFO's and other highly paid C-suite executives to try to compensate for Kowalski's leadership shortcomings, but none of them have lasted long.

This is not simply a disagreement about strategy. It is a question of honesty, accountability, and transparency to the T1D Community that BT1D serves. Solid, grounded, thoughtful leadership and a competent board of directors would never have let the fracture happen. BT1D needs a

fresh set of eyes, new leadership with a successful track record of running large organizations and the ability to formulate a cohesive strategy for achieving our collective goal: a T1D Cure.

You are all critical members of the T1D community and if you believe that BT1D should serve our collective cause in an open, honest and transparent manner, please reach out to your BT1D relationship person to share your thinking or contact the Board directly.

Respectfully,

David Panzirer – Trustee of the Helmsley Charitable Trust for 18 years. Helped in the creation of the T1D Fund with significant Fund commitments and recruited many early significant donors. Two daughters with T1D, Morgan diagnosed in 2007 and Caroline in 2016.

Anastasia Bukhman – Former Board Member of the T1D Fund and Trustee and Chair of the Bukhman Foundation which is a former T1D Fund donor. Supporter of T1D research for more than a decade. Daughter was diagnosed with T1D 12 years ago.

Tim Clark - 19 years major donor and fundraiser for BT1D and BT1D Exec Cmte. Prior T1D Fund Board Member and Board Chair and Chair of Investment Committee. Daughter Melissa was diagnosed 19 years ago.

Jay Eastman – early T1D Fund donor and board member of the T1D Fund for eight years, including Board Chair. Leading fundraising family for BT1D for the last 21 years and Children's Congress Chair. Daughter Merrill was diagnosed 21 years ago at 15 months old.

Ellen Leake - 29-year supporter and major donor of BT1D and the T1D Fund. Past Chair and Vice Chair of BT1D. Fund donor and former Nominating & Governance Chair and board member of the T1D Fund. Daughter Elizabeth was diagnosed 29 years ago.

David Nelms - 36-year BT1D major donor and fundraiser. Past BT1D Board Member/Treasurer, early T1D Fund major donor, board member and Capital Committee Chair. Son Bradlee was diagnosed 36 years ago.

Amy Raskin – T1D Fund donor, T1D Fund Board member for four years including Vice Chair. Son Andy was diagnosed six years ago.

Jennifer Ross – 30+ years supporter of Breakthrough T1D, T1D Fund donor and board member. Personally, living with T1D.