

# House Concurrent Resolution No. 15

## 97TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES WALTON GRAY (Sponsor), ELLINGTON, PACE, SMITH (85),  
MIMS, MORGAN, NORR AND SWEARINGEN (Co-sponsors).

0345L.011

1       **WHEREAS**, two million African-Americans, or 1 in 12, have the sickle cell trait and  
2 more than 80,000 people in the United States, 98% of whom are African-American, are affected  
3 by sickle cell disease; and

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5       **WHEREAS**, some, but not all, people who have sickle cell anemia need blood  
6 transfusions to prevent life-threatening problems such as stroke, spleen problems, or acute chest  
7 syndrome or to treat a sudden worsening of anemia due to an infection or enlarged spleen; and

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9       **WHEREAS**, blood transfusions are sometimes the best way to treat and prevent some of  
10 the complications of sickle cell anemia and blood transfusions are commonly used to treat  
11 worsening anemia and sickle cell complications; and

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13       **WHEREAS**, the human leukocyte antigen (HLA) system in humans distinguishes from  
14 an immunological standpoint, foreign pathogens and tissues from the human body, and therefore  
15 in this capacity, plays a major role in the immunologic regulations of bone marrow  
16 transplantation. A key factor to the success of allogeneic bone marrow transplant is the ability  
17 to closely match the patient and donor for a group of proteins found on the surface of most of the  
18 cells of the human body; and

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20       **WHEREAS**, African-American patients who need a bone marrow transplant have an  
21 especially hard time finding an unrelated bone marrow donor because African-Americans make  
22 up only 12% of the United States population and, thus, fewer potential donors are available,  
23 variations in HLA-types among people with African ancestry than in any other ethnicity are  
24 numerous, and some individuals with both African and European or other ancestry may have  
25 novel combinations of HLA-types that are not found in either parental population; and

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27       **WHEREAS**, it is critical to match blood types for African-Americans with other African-  
28 Americans because there are differences in the frequency of certain HLA-types among ethnic  
29 groups, and therefore patients are more likely to find a good match among donors from their own  
30 ethnic group; and

31       **WHEREAS**, the American Red Cross is working to partner with the African-American  
32 and Hispanic-American community in our region to close the gap on minority blood donations  
33 and the need for education about the safety of the blood supply and of the blood donation process  
34 is pivotal to the survival of the community. The American Red Cross is participating in health  
35 fairs, conducting educational sessions, and seeking to dispel long-standing cultural myths. The  
36 organization is working to hire and retain a more diverse workforce that can represent the  
37 communities we work in and ultimately assist us in overcoming many of the language and cultural  
38 barriers of these individuals' participation in blood donation:

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40       **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of  
41 Representatives of the Ninety-seventh General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate  
42 concurring therein, hereby designates December 15, 2013, as "American Red Cross Minority  
43 Blood Drive Day" in Missouri in honor of Dr. Charges Richard Drew, an African-American  
44 physician and research pioneer in the field of blood transfusions; and

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46       **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly encourages and urges all  
47 citizens of the State of Missouri to participate in appropriate activities on "American Red Cross  
48 Minority Blood Drive Day" to honor the medical revolution Dr. Drew made within the medical  
49 profession by storing blood plasma, establishing the American Red Cross blood bank, and  
50 organizing the world's first blood bank drive.

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