

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 56

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE GRAY.

5693H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

Relating to American Red Cross minority blood drive day.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

2 **WHEREAS**, two million African Americans, or 1 in 12, have the sickle cell trait and
3 more than 90,000 people in the United States, 98 percent of whom are African American, are
4 affected by sickle cell disease; and

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
7 chest syndrome or to treat a sudden worsening of anemia due to an infection or enlarged
8 spleen; and

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

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

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21 **WHEREAS**, African American patients who need bone marrow transplants have an
22 especially hard time finding an unrelated bone marrow donor because African-Americans

23 make up only 12 percent of the United States population and, thus, fewer potential donors are
24 available; variations in HLA-types among people with African ancestry are more numerous
25 than in any other ethnicity; and some individuals with both African and European or other
26 ancestry may have novel combinations of HLA-types that are not found in either parental
27 population; and

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

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

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44 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of
45 Representatives of the One Hundred Second General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the
46 Senate concurring therein, hereby designate May 21 of each year as "American Red Cross
47 Minority Blood Drive Day" in Missouri in honor of Dr. Charles Richard Drew, an African-
48 American physician and research pioneer in the field of blood transfusions; and

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

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56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution be sent to the Governor for his
57 approval or rejection pursuant to the Missouri Constitution.

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