

# House Concurrent Resolution No. 43

## 98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTON GRAY.

2576L.011

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

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% of whom are African-American, are affected  
4 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 chest  
7 syndrome or to treat a sudden worsening of anemia due to an infection or enlarged spleen; and

8  
9       **WHEREAS**, blood transfusions are sometimes the best way to treat and prevent some  
10 of the complications of sickle cell anemia and blood transfusions are commonly used to treat  
11 worsening anemia and sickle cell complications; and

12  
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

19  
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

26  
27       **WHEREAS**, it is critical to match blood types for African-Americans with other  
28 African-Americans because there are differences in the frequency of certain HLA-types among  
29 ethnic groups, and therefore patients are more likely to find a good match among donors from  
30 their own ethnic group; and

31  
32       **WHEREAS**, the American Red Cross is working to partner with the African-American  
33 and Hispanic-American community in our region to close the gap on minority blood donations  
34 and the need for education about the safety of the blood supply and of the blood donation process  
35 is pivotal to the survival of the community. The American Red Cross is participating in health

36 fairs, conducting educational sessions, and seeking to dispel long-standing cultural myths. The  
37 organization is working to hire and retain a more diverse workforce that can represent the  
38 communities we work in and ultimately assist us in overcoming many of the language and  
39 cultural barriers of these individuals' participation in blood donation:

40

41 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of  
42 Representatives of the Ninety-eighth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate  
43 concurring therein, hereby designates May 15, 2015, as "American Red Cross Minority Blood  
44 Drive Day" in Missouri in honor of Dr. Charles Richard Drew, an African-American physician  
45 and research pioneer in the field of blood transfusions; and

46

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

✓