

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 225

To designate November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day to “Give Thanks, Give Life” and to discuss organ and tissue donation with other family members.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 8, 1999

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. FRIST, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. MACK, Mr. DODD, Mr. THURMOND Mr. HAGEL, Mr. ROBB, and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

NOVEMBER 19, 1999

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

To designate November 23, 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day to “Give Thanks, Give Life” and to discuss organ and tissue donation with other family members.

Whereas traditionally, Thanksgiving is a time for families to take time out of their busy lives to come together and to give thanks for the many blessings in their lives;

Whereas approximately 21,000 men, women, and children in the United States are given the gift of life each year through transplantation surgery, made possible by the generosity of organ and tissue donations;

Whereas more than 66,000 Americans are awaiting their chance to prolong their lives by finding a matching donor;

Whereas nearly 5,000 of these patients each year (or 13 patients each day) die while waiting for a donated heart, liver, kidney, or other organ;

Whereas nationwide there are up to 15,000 potential donors annually, but families' consent to donation is received for less than 6,000;

Whereas the need for organ donations greatly exceeds the supply available;

Whereas designation as an organ donor on a driver's license or voter's registration is a valuable step, but does not ensure donation when an occasion arises;

Whereas the demand for transplantation will likely increase in the coming years due to the growing safety of transplantation surgery due to improvements in technology and drug developments, prolonged life expectancy, and increased prevalence of diseases that may lead to organ damage and failure, including hypertension, alcoholism, and hepatitis C infection;

Whereas the need for a more diverse donor pool, including a variety of racial and ethnic minorities, will continue to grow in the coming years;

Whereas the final decision on whether a potential donor can share the gift of life usually is made by surviving family members regardless of the patient's initial intent;

Whereas many Americans have indicated a willingness to donate their organs and tissues but have not discussed this critical matter with the family members who are most

likely to make the decision, if the occasion arises, as to whether that person will be an organ and tissue donor;

Whereas some family members may be reluctant to give consent to donate their deceased loved one's organs and tissues at a very difficult and emotional time if that person has not clearly expressed a desire or willingness to do so;

Whereas the vast majority of Americans are likely to spend part of Thanksgiving Day with some of those family members who would be approached to make such a decision; and

Whereas it is fitting for families to spend a portion of that day discussing how they might give life to others on a day devoted to giving thanks for their own blessings: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Senate designates November 23,
- 2 2000, Thanksgiving Day, as a day to "Give Thanks, Give
- 3 Life" and to discuss organ and tissue donation with other
- 4 family members so that informed decisions can be made
- 5 if the occasion to donate arises.

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