

employ hundreds of residents as well as adding to the economic viability of our neighborhoods.

Since its formation in 1979, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has represented the interests of more than 1.2 million Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States and Puerto Rico. In addition to its annual convention featuring hundreds of domestic and international exhibitors, the chamber also supports Hispanic businesses with legislative and governmental affairs services, business development and marketing services, and active promotion of international trade by networking with Latin American governments.

Through its Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship Initiative, the chamber has also established a \$20 million venture capital fund and, in partnership with the Ford Motor Company, has formed a bilingual National Director of Hispanic Businesses. It has also sewn the seeds of entrepreneurship by sponsoring programs for Hispanic youth such as Bizfest and funding Hispanic scholarship programs.

The chamber's contributions to the Hispanic business community have and will continue to enrich all of our lives. I urge my colleagues to join me in giving the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce the recognition that it deserves.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 277. I am very pleased to see that we are recognizing the important contributions of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. As a former businessman from the lower Rio Grande Valley in south Texas, I can personally attest to the invaluable assistance that the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides for the Hispanic business community.

The rapid growth of the Latino population has made our community a more crucial part of the American economy than ever before. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has provided the vision and the leadership to promote a spirit of entrepreneurship and an ethic of competitiveness in the Hispanic business community. It has also served as an effective advocate by communicating the community's concerns in the greater business and political arena.

I want to thank the Hispanic Chamber for all of the hard work it has put into achieving economic progress for our community, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution. In south Texas, we are members of the Texas Association of Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, and we have had lots of meetings and we have had lots of successful gatherings, and so that is why I am here to show our support for this group.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 277, recognizing the important contributions of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

From top-level corporate positions, to Mom and Pop corner stores, Hispanics in America

make tremendous contributions to the nation. Minority owned businesses are growing and creating jobs faster than other companies.

In 1979, realizing the enormous potential of the Hispanic business community in the United States and the need for a national organization to represent its interests, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC) was incorporated in my home state of New Mexico, creating a structured organization aimed at developing a business network that would provide the Hispanic community with cohesion and strength. Since its inception, the USHCC has worked towards bringing the issues and concerns of the nation's more than 1.2 million Hispanic-owned businesses to the forefront.

Throughout the years, the Albuquerque Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has improved the quality of life in the Middle Rio Grande corridor by promoting economic and education activities, with an emphasis on small business.

This has also been a great year for the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber officially opened the doors to their Barelás Job Opportunity Center. This center houses a state-of-the-art technology lab and will focus on work force development and entrepreneur opportunities. The facility is also home to the U.S. Small Business Administration Business Information Center and the Senior Corp of Retired Executives. This Center is a hub for consultations on how to grow a business, start a business, manage a business or capitalize a business.

Over the past 26 years the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce has experienced change and growth that would rival any successful business. I am grateful to the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce for helping to make Albuquerque a better place and improving the quality of life in New Mexico.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I want today to address my resolution, H. Con. Res. 277 to recognize the important contributions of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Speaker, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was founded in New Mexico in 1979. Headquartered in Washington, DC the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce currently has a network of more than 200 chapters in the United States and its territories. One of those active chapters is in my district, in fact the San Marcos Hispanic Chamber of Commerce just held its successful Turkey Trot Golf Tournament during our Thanksgiving break.

The importance of this national organization cannot be overstated, Hispanics have an annual purchasing power of approximately \$500 billion and the Chamber effectively represents the more than 1 million Hispanic-owned businesses. The organization's recent growth has shown its influence in communities not traditionally considered centers for Latino development, locations such as Richmond, Virginia; Charlotte, North Carolina and Minnesota's Twin Cities area.

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides important recognition to its members and supporters through an annual awards program. Moreover, the organization furnishes its membership with a host of critical services, ably guided by the leadership of its President and CEO George Herrera, Chair Ms. Elizabeth Lisboa-Farrow, who also chairs the DC Chamber of Commerce; and Vice Chairman J.R. Gonzales, President of a communications firm in Austin, Texas.

Importantly, the Chamber has maintained international trade as one of its top long term priorities, even maintaining an office in Mexico City. The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides and promotes the kind of private sector trade initiatives and assistance that I believe all of us can support.

Mr. Speaker, I am gratified to be able to bring to the Floor today this resolution to recognize the important contributions of the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and ask for the support of members in passing this item.

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 277.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 25) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding tuberous sclerosis, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 25

Whereas at least two children born each day will be affected with tuberous sclerosis;

Whereas nearly one million people worldwide are known to have tuberous sclerosis;

Whereas tuberous sclerosis affects all races and ethnic groups equally;

Whereas tuberous sclerosis is caused by either an inherited autosomal disorder or by a spontaneous genetic mutation;

Whereas when tuberous sclerosis is genetically transmitted as an autosomal dominant disorder, a child with a parent with the gene will have a 50-percent chance of inheriting the disease;

Whereas two-thirds of the cases of tuberous sclerosis are believed to be a result of spontaneous mutation, although the cause of such mutations is a mystery;

Whereas diagnosis takes an average of 90 days with consultation of at least three specialists;

Whereas tuberous sclerosis frequently goes undiagnosed because of the obscurity of the disease and the mild form the symptoms may take; and

Whereas the Congress as an institution, and Members of Congress as individuals, are in unique positions to help raise public awareness about the need for increased funding for research, detection, and treatment of tuberous sclerosis and to support the fight against tuberous sclerosis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) all Americans should take an active role in the fight against tuberous sclerosis by all means available to them, including early and complete clinical testing and investigating family histories;

(2) the role played by national and community organizations and health care providers

in promoting awareness of the importance of early diagnosis, testing, and ongoing screening should be recognized and applauded;

(3) the Federal Government has a responsibility to—

(A) endeavor to raise awareness about the importance of the early detection of, and proper treatment for, tuberous sclerosis;

(B) increase funding for research so that the causes of, and improved treatment for, tuberous sclerosis may be discovered; and

(C) continue to consider ways to improve access to, and the quality of, health care services for detecting and treating tuberous sclerosis; and

(4) the Director of the National Institutes of Health should take a leadership role in the fight against tuberous sclerosis by acting with appropriate offices within the National Institutes of Health to provide to the Congress a five-year research plan for tuberous sclerosis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 25.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to support this concurrent resolution increasing awareness of tuberous sclerosis and supporting programs for greater research.

Though few Americans have ever heard of tuberous sclerosis, it is a disease that affects 50,000 here at home and nearly 1 million people worldwide. It is a genetic disorder that causes seizures and tumor growth in vital organs such as the brain, heart, kidneys, lungs, and skin. Though these tumors are benign, they often compromise the proper functioning of essential organs. For example, many of those afflicted have some type of learning disability or behavioral problem caused by the combination of the brain tumors and seizures.

Individuals with tuberous sclerosis and their families face significant financial, emotional and social hardships. More than 60 percent of those living with the disease will never live independently. This means a dramatically reduced quality of life for both those afflicted and their families.

We can make a difference by raising awareness about the importance of early detection and proper treatment for tuberous sclerosis. The resources of the Federal Government's health and resource institutes can help advance the understanding of the biological factors causing this disease. Working in partnership with other research initiatives, we can help reduce the long-term impact of this problem.

H. Con. Res. 25 takes an important step in the fight against tuberous sclerosis, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) for her dedication to the issue of tuberous sclerosis. H. Con. Res. 25 expresses our support in the fight against tuberous sclerosis, a rare genetic disorder that affects the central nervous system.

Tuberous sclerosis affects one in 6,000 babies in our country and does not discriminate by race or by gender. At least two babies born today will be touched in this country by this disorder. It can cause kidney problems, brain tumors, skin abnormalities, seizures, and various degrees of mental disability. Tuberous sclerosis is frequently unrecognized and frequently misdiagnosed.

There is no cure for this disease, yet. The NINDS, one of the institutes of health, is studying this disorder, trying to find new treatments, trying to find new methods of prevention, and trying ultimately, of course, to find a cure.

Congress must continue to improve access to quality health care services for detecting and treating tuberous sclerosis.

This resolution encourages the director of NIH to take a leadership role in the fight to eradicate tuberous sclerosis.

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As Members of Ohio are in unique positions to raise awareness about disorders that simply do not garner the attention that they deserve, the bill of the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) will help bring focus to the fight against tuberous sclerosis. I urge Congress to pass this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), who we are all indebted to for bringing the issue of tuberous sclerosis to our attention.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 25, expressing the sense of Congress regarding tuberous sclerosis. I commend the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Commerce, and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), for acting so quickly to report this important legislation.

H. Con. Res. 25 represents the opportunity Congress has to educate Americans about the little known genetic disease tuberous sclerosis. It is estimated that at least two children born each day will have tuberous sclerosis. There are approximately 1 million peo-

ple worldwide who are affected. TS is a disorder that can be inherited or result from genetic mutation. The disease is characterized by seizures and tumors which form in vital organs such as brain, heart, skin, kidneys and lungs. Though not malignant, these tumors can cause debilitating and sometimes life-threatening problems.

Diagnosis of TS is very difficult, and all too often it goes undetected or is misdiagnosed because its symptoms are similar to those of more common conditions like epilepsy or autism. It is often first recognized following a series of epileptic seizures or varying degrees of developmental delay. An average TS diagnosis takes 90 days and involves up to three specialists and numerous tests.

Preliminary research has found specific genes associated with tuberous sclerosis, but to date there is no widely used genetic test, leaving diagnosis to be based on clinical findings. Increased awareness of TS among health care providers and the general population is the key to early diagnosis.

As is the case with many diseases, early detection often determines TS patients' successes in managing the disease. With the variety of treatments currently available to ease symptoms and improve the quality of life for people with tuberous sclerosis, funding to promote awareness in the medical community as well as research to increase early diagnosis really are imperative.

For instance, early intervention has the potential to reduce developmental delay experienced by young patients. Likewise, surgery to remove tumors can help preserve organ function. TS is a permanent medical condition, and those affected and their families must cope with the illness for their entire lives. In some cases, TS does not preclude those who have it from living a relatively normal life. However, in most cases, it is much more intrusive. In addition to the difficulty of diagnosis, there are other post-diagnostic issues with which families must contend, such as obtaining adequate health insurance and, later in life, arranging for independent living solutions.

H. Con. Res. 25 highlights the severity of tuberous sclerosis and affirms the Federal Government's responsibility to facilitate research in this area. We must build on the foundation of knowledge of tuberous sclerosis that has already been built, largely through the organization and resources of friends and families of TS patients.

This bill instructs the director of the National Institutes of Health to work with the appropriate offices within NIH to bring awareness to this disease and to devise a 5-year plan for outlining research initiatives for TS. Congress must act to foster increased research on tuberous sclerosis. We must use our excellent scientific and medical resources to better understand this very complicated disease.

I urge my colleagues to support this worthwhile and necessary legislation.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time and commend him for moving so expeditiously on this resolution, and also I want to commend the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) for her incredible work in this area and other areas. I understand she is also very similar, in moving a similar resolution on Crohn's Disease.

Yesterday, in the Nation's capital, we had an amazing function of families across America gathering for the Cancer Research Family Awareness Luncheon. Sam Donaldson was here, himself a cancer survivor. The whole idea behind the luncheon was to honor those who have worked tirelessly to make people aware of what early detection can do to cure it.

My mother is a three-time cancer survivor. In each case, because she caught it early, she was cured with operation rather than chemo or radiation, sort of a miracle. It started in 1960 with breast cancer; in 1980, then lung cancer; and, just recently, with uterine cancer.

The fact that we make people aware of these diseases so that their doctors and moms and dads can spot them when we see them and treat them sooner makes immeasurable difference not only in the care and treatment of these diseases, but very often in life itself. Many cancer survivors were there to tell their stories yesterday about how, because someone took the trouble to talk about these diseases on television, on the radio, on the floor of the House today, somebody paid attention, somebody caught it early, and somebody was better off for it.

Yesterday, for example, a young woman who is an anchor of a San Antonio, Texas television station was honored for the work she did. She discovered she had breast cancer. Instead of hiding the fact, she went on the air with it and actually did a documentary of how she went through treatment, and how they operated on the cancer and how she went through the incredible ordeal of the chemotherapy, losing her hair. She even did an anchor one night, bald, just to show that you can get through these things and you can live and you can survive if you are willing to be brave enough to face these diseases head-on and treat them early and deal with them.

Here, in this case, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) has brought to us a concern of so many families, 50,000 families in America which have someone in their family with tuberous sclerosis. And here is another genetic disease that, if we pay enough attention to it, put a little research money on it, we will find a way to cure it and save an uncounted number of lives not only in America but around the world, and certainly make

life much more comfortable and bearable for those who suffer with that disease today.

Again, I want to congratulate my colleague from New York for her fine work, and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health (Mr. BILIRAKIS), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), for their excellent cooperation in moving this and similar resolutions forward.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of the concurrent resolution, this Member wishes to add his strong support for H. Con. Res. 25, which expresses the sense of Congress that the Federal Government has a responsibility to raise public awareness of tuberous sclerosis and educate all Americans about the importance of the early detection of, and proper treatment for the disease.

This Member would like to commend the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN], the Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the distinguished gentleman from Michigan [Mr. DINGELL], the ranking member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, for bringing this important resolution to the House Floor today. This Member would also like to commend the gentlelady from New York [Mrs. KELLY] for sponsoring H. Con. Res. 25 and for her personal interest in tuberous sclerosis.

Tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) is a genetic disorder characterized by seizures and tumor growth in vital organs such as the brain, heart, kidneys, lungs and skin. Individuals with tuberous sclerosis commonly begin having seizures during the first year of life, and conventional epilepsy therapies often do not control the seizure activity in infants, children or adults. Seizures, as well as brain tumors, contribute to cognitive impairment. As a result, a majority of those afflicted with tuberous sclerosis experience some form of learning disability or behavioral problem, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism or mental retardation.

This Member recently received a letter from his constituents, Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Niemeyer. The Niemeyer's are the proud grandparents of a 23-month old granddaughter, who was diagnosed with tuberous sclerosis at four weeks of age, having tumors on the brain. The Niemeyer's fear that their granddaughter is severely disabled, both mentally and developmentally.

The toll on the family of a person with tuberous sclerosis is enormous. Care for a tuberous sclerosis patient often requires on-going treatment that involves multiple medical specialists, speech, occupational and other therapists, as well as those skilled in the proper care and educational and emotional development of a medically and mentally disabled individual.

House Concurrent Resolution 25 expresses the sense of the Congress that the Federal Government has a responsibility to raise public awareness of tuberous sclerosis and educate all Americans about the importance of the early detection of, and proper treatment for, tuberous sclerosis. In addition, the resolution urges an increase in funding for research on tuberous sclerosis. Finally, H. Con. Res. 25 urges the National Institutes of Health to take a leadership role and to provide a five-year research plan in the fight against tuberous sclerosis.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this Member urges his colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 25.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 25, which expresses the sense of Congress regarding tuberous sclerosis. This measure urges increased federal aid for research and calls on the Director of the National Institutes of Health to help develop a five-year research plan for tuberous sclerosis. H. Con. Res. 25 also declares that all Americans should take an active role in the fight against this genetic disorder.

At least two children born each day will be affected with tuberous sclerosis (TS). Nearly one million people worldwide are known to have TS. TS does not discriminate against any race or ethnic group.

According to a report released by the Tuberous Sclerosis Association, preschool children with TS develop intellectual and behavioral problems. The intellectual development varies greatly. Approximately 40% will not have global (affecting all areas of intelligence) intellectual impairments. The remaining may have mild, moderate, or severe mental retardation.

It appears that children under the age of five years with moderate to severe mental retardation will remain mentally retarded to this degree into adulthood.

Problems with behavior are some of the most common difficulties experienced by children with TS. Poor expressive language, poor development of social skills, motor impairments, and hyperactivity or inattention are a few examples.

As this bill prescribes, early intervention is most effective. It has been found that during the first five years of life, developmentally disabled children tend to fall farther and farther behind children their own age who do not have developmental difficulties. These declines in the rate of intellectual development of disabled children and reduce with early intervention.

Mr. Speaker, let us work together to raise awareness of tuberous sclerosis and help children with this disorder to live a normal life. I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 25.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PETRI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 25, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL HANSEN'S DISEASE PROGRAMS CENTER

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2441) to amend the Public Health Service Act to redesignate a facility as the National Hansen's Disease Programs Center, and for other purposes.