

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1156.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

A FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2417) "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes."

SUPPORTING NATIONAL MARROW DONOR PROGRAM AND OTHER BONE MARROW DONOR PROGRAMS

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 206) supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 206

Whereas up to 30,000 people each year are diagnosed with leukemia or other blood diseases and approximately 20,000 will not find a marrow donor match within their family and must rely upon strangers;

Whereas diseases such as leukemia, aplastic anemia, and defective immune systems can lead to a rapid deterioration in an individual's health and ultimately the individual's death if potential marrow donors are not identified;

Whereas volunteers in donor programs provide a life-saving service to those that are afflicted with leukemia or other blood diseases;

Whereas since the founding of the National Marrow Donor Program in 1986, it has facilitated more than 15,000 unrelated transplants for patients with leukemia or other blood diseases;

Whereas the National Marrow Donor Program provides potential donors with infor-

mation on how to become a bone marrow donor;

Whereas the National Marrow Donor Program has a worldwide reach and a large database of potential donors;

Whereas the National Marrow Donor Program currently facilitates more than 160 transplants each month; and

Whereas the National Marrow Donor Program makes a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs; and

(2) encourages all Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation and to discuss such donation with their families and friends.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House is considering House Concurrent Resolution 206 introduced by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) to recognize the important work that the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs do to save lives.

Bone marrow transplants are often one of the last options available to patients struggling to fight debilitating and often terminal illnesses. Unfortunately, finding a bone marrow match is very difficult. In fact, every year nearly two-thirds of patients in need of a bone marrow transplant will not find a marrow donor match within their family and, therefore, must rely on the help of strangers.

Each month the National Bone Marrow Registry coordinates more than 150 transplants. With a diverse registry of more than 4 million potential bone marrow and cord blood donors, the National Bone Marrow Registry offers hope to thousands of patients. Just last month, the House approved H.R. 3034, the National Bone Marrow Donor Registry Reauthorization Act, to reauthorize the national bone marrow registry for an additional 5-year period.

Since 1986, the National Bone Marrow Donor Program has facilitated more than 15,000 transplants for patients. I hope the Senate will join us soon in extending this program to guarantee that thousands more will benefit. This resolution will raise awareness about the

bone marrow donor programs, and will encourage more Americans to donate, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) for raising awareness regarding the importance of bone marrow donation. There are at least 20,000 Americans today who need a bone marrow transplant but cannot find a compatible donor within their own family.

National Marrow Awareness Month is a vehicle for encouraging more people to join the bone marrow registry, a noble goal, and it is right that Congress acknowledge the importance of this month.

But, Mr. Speaker, the timing is unfortunate. The Republican majority today is giving this body fewer than 24 hours to consider legislation which will have a dramatic impact on the financial security of 39 million retirees and disabled Americans, as well as their families. This bill takes \$400 billion out of taxpayers' pockets and puts much of that money in the pockets of the drug industry and the insurance industry, the two industries that sat in back rooms with Republican leaders and wrote this bill. Every American has a stake in the outcome of this. Less than 24 hours to review, debate and vote on an 1,100-page bill that erects a brand new private insurance system for stand-alone drug coverage which replaces tried and true Medicare. The bill features such a meager drug benefit that seniors will still be unable to afford the medicines they need, a bill that creates a fast-track process to expedite reductions in Medicare benefits, a bill that makes different seniors pay different premiums for the exact same coverage, and a bill that launches a private insurance experiment, privatizing Medicare, forcing millions of seniors in this country to pay more or join an HMO. We received that bill yesterday, that 1,100-page Medicare bill, and are being forced to vote on that bill today.

With all due respect, I support this Burgess legislation and applaud the gentleman's efforts, but we need every minute we can get to try to get a handle on just how dramatically this Medicare privatization bill will turn our world upside down.

Mr. Speaker, we all know what is going to happen tonight. We have seen this same scenario play out month after month this year. In April, it started where in the middle of the night Congress passed contentious, important tax legislation by a handful of votes. Every single month during the summer, Congress voted on important, controversial legislation: Head Start, budget reconciliation, the tax cut, Medicare, last year the trade promotion bill authority, always between

12 midnight and four in the morning, always in the dead of night, always on Thursday night so the papers did not pick it up until Saturday, always when the media had gone to bed and the American public had turned off their television sets, and never appearing in the paper the next day, always held over to Saturday's paper because of that.

I hope, Mr. Speaker that does not happen with this Medicare bill tonight. I hope we can actually debate it during the late afternoon and early evening so people in this country can see what in fact is in it.

On this legislation we are considering today, I appreciate the efforts of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), but on a day when this body is asked to participate in such remarkably irresponsible decisionmaking on the most important health care vote of this session, no Member right now can devote to this Burgess resolution the attention it deserves.

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), the author of this measure.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for bringing this resolution to the floor. I would like to thank the leadership for allowing this resolution to come to the floor late in the session; and I would disagree that the timing is unfortunate, I think the timing is perfect. I would also like to thank the staff of the Committee on Energy and Commerce for their hard work on this issue.

Bone marrow donation is critical to millions of cancer patients. Every year, nearly 30,000 people are diagnosed with leukemia or other treatable blood diseases. Oftentimes, the only course of treatment is donation of bone marrow from one person to another.

The House Concurrent Resolution 206 urges Americans to register with the National Marrow Donor Registry. Since the National Donor Registry was founded some 16 years ago, it has facilitated the more than 15,000 donations for patients with blood disorders. The registry now has 5 million volunteers. I am one of those volunteers, having joined the registry in 1999. The 15,000 volunteers that have been called on to donate marrow to sick and dying patients have saved thousands of lives, but they have impacted even thousands more by saving the lives of a mother, a father, a brother, a sister, a son or a daughter, keeping loving families whole and communities intact.

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On June 7 of this year, I had the opportunity to celebrate the life of one of my constituents who had been diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Mr. Cliff Ackerman. A donor to the national marrow donor registry program

saved Mr. Ackerman's life. Mr. Ackerman was diagnosed with cancer in March of 1998 and did not have a stem cell match in his family. He was forced to find a match through the National Bone Marrow Registry. A match was found from a donor in Washington, D.C., Mr. Perry Apelbaum. Perry is a member of the House Judiciary Committee staff. Mr. Apelbaum joined the registry in 1990. As fate would have it when Mr. Ackerman got sick, Mr. Apelbaum turned out to be a perfect match. This example underscores how important the program is: a congressional staffer here in Washington, D.C. turned out to save the life of a man in my district in Lewisville, Texas.

The marrow donor program has helped thousands of families who will experience a second chance to enjoy life with a child, with a husband or wife, or with a brother or sister. I thank the countless number of heroes who have given the gift of life or who are waiting on the donor list to provide a lifesaving service to those who are afflicted with leukemia or other blood disorders.

The House has already reauthorized the marrow donor program this year in a bipartisan manner. It is now up to the other body to complete this work. We hope that they will. But in the meantime, we must continue to raise the profile of this important program, and this resolution does just that.

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. I think it is critically important that we do that to move this program forward.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 206, legislation expressing Congressional support for the National Marrow Donor Program during this National Marrow Awareness Month.

At the outset, let me thank my colleague from Texas, Mr. BURGESS, for sponsoring this legislation, and Chairman TAUZIN of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, my colleague and neighbor from Florida Mr. BILIRAKIS, for helping expedite consideration of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the National Marrow Donor Program is a true modern medical miracle that saves lives here and throughout the world every single day of the year. Since its establishment more than 16 years ago, the registry has grown to more than 5,000,000 volunteers. These are true volunteers in every sense of the word. They have given of their time to take a simple blood test to be listed in the national registry. For the more than 17,000 volunteers who have been called upon to donate marrow, they have undergone a relatively simple surgical procedure to donate their bone marrow to save the life of a man, woman or child with leukemia or one of 60 otherwise fatal blood disorders.

Earlier this year in a sign of strong Congressional support, the House unanimously ap-

proved my legislation, H.R. 3034, the National Bone Marrow Donor Registry Reauthorization Act, to continue the work of registry's work for another five years. We look forward to its passage in the other body.

The National Marrow Donor Program is a precious national resource, and I want to pay tribute to the men and women there who work tirelessly to ensure that Americans in need of life-saving transplants receive the bone marrow, peripheral blood stem cells, or umbilical cord blood they need.

Recognizing the need for a single source of information, Congress endorsed by request in 1986 for a small appropriation to the United States Navy to establish the National Bone Marrow Donor Registry. Our goal was to improve the facilitation of bone marrow transplants by coordinating adult, volunteer marrow donors as well as a full range of supporting services to donors, patients and physicians. With the funded I have provided every year since through appropriations bills for the Navy and the Department of Health and Human Services, The National Marrow Donor Program has operated the Registry first under contract with the Navy and now under a competitively awarded contract with the Department of Health and Human Services. During that time, I have watched proudly as the Registry has developed into the international leader in marrow, blood stem cell, and umbilical cord blood transplantation.

Having had the great pleasure to meet with hundreds of donors and patients, I can tell you that donating bone marrow is a true life-changing experience. The experience of giving life to another human being is beyond mere words. Today, the National Marrow Donor Program remains the single source for physicians and patients searching for marrow to treat a variety of diseases. Through a network of 91 Donor Centers, 11 Cord Blood Banks, 150 Transplant Centers, and 19 International Cooperative Registries, it allows physicians to select for the best matched source of adult stem cells whether it be from volunteer marrow or blood donors or umbilical cord blood units. This large network has made marrow donation a world-changing experience. On any given day, bone marrow from our registry is being flown around the world at the same time bone marrow is being flown to a U.S. hospital through our formal relationship with the international registries.

A diverse Registry of volunteer bone marrow donors has been recruited. And now the Registry also lists more than 28,000 units of umbilical cord blood for potential transfer. Additionally, the National Marrow Donor Program has helped more than 250 patients receive cord blood transplants since the inclusion of umbilical cord blood units in the Registry began in 1999. Working with the National Marrow Donor Program and individually, the NMDP network of 11 cord blood banks have provided more than 881 cord blood units for transplantation since 1997. This network represents the single largest number of cord blood donations in the U.S.—232—in the past year.

The National Marrow Donor Program also recognizes the importance of maintaining an infrastructure that supports the Registry. To help physicians maximize the time they spend with their patients and minimize the time it takes to search the Registry, the Program has developed a real-time, electronic searching

database that links more than 400 partnering organizations. The resulting transplants are made possible through the efforts of millions of volunteers and professionals, connected through an award-winning integrated information system that quickly records, analyzes, and electronically transmits millions of pieces of critical medical data every day to and from hundreds of medical organizations.

There is more to providing marrow and other sources of blood stem cells than simply helping physicians search the Registry. Patients also need assistance. Therefore, the Program provides support services for individual patients to help them through the transplant process. The Patient Advocacy program provides patients with services such as information about transplants, assistance in intervening with insurers to determine coverage, and financial assistance. These efforts include patients assistance funds, case management services, referring physician education, consultation on the best match sources, and accelerated searching to facilitate transplants with an urgent need. The Program also provides support to patients after the transplant occurs to ensure that they can return to a normal, healthy life. Without this support, many patients would not be able to obtain life-saving transplants.

Even with these wonderful successes, we all recognize that the number of donors is not sufficient to meet the needs of every American. Each year more than 30,000 children and adults are diagnosed with life-threatening blood diseases, such as leukemia and plastic anemia, as well as certain immune system and genetic disorders for which a marrow or blood stem cell transplant can be a cure. These transplants require matching certain tissue traits of the donor and patient. Because these traits are inherited, a patient's most likely match is someone of the same heritage. Thus, men and women of the National Marrow Donor Program work continuously to recruit more donors, especially minorities who historically have difficulty finding matches. Since 1995, the Program has more than tripled the number of minority donors.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when our nation seeks to bring the nations and the people of the world closer together, to live in peace, and better understand each other, we can look to the National Marrow Donor Program as one important way to achieve these goals. There is no greater cause than to save a life, and with the ongoing support of every member of this House we can adopt this Resolution today to support the many heroes who have contributed to the work and vision of this program.

From the early days when we sought a home for the program, and had a few doors slammed in our faces, there was Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. and Dr. Bob Graves. There was Captain Bob Hartzman of the United States Navy who connected us with the Navy Medical Command where we appropriated the first small amount of funding to give birth to the program. There were the early medical pioneers such as Dr. Robert Good, Dr. John Hansen, Dr. Donnell Thomas, and Dr. Jerry Barbosa, all of whom helped perfect the science of marrow transplantation and who assisted us in our legislative quest to establish a federal registry.

There were the members of Congress, past and present, who stood by me as I sought funding to start up the program, to recruit mar-

row donors, and to perfect the marrow transplant procedures. There were my colleagues on the Appropriations and Energy and Commerce Committees who helped expedite these funding requests and the consideration of several authorization bills.

There were the members of the board of the National Marrow Donor Program and the Marrow Foundation, who have volunteered their time to establish a finely tuned international registry that quickly and efficiently matches marrow donors and patients to give them the best chance of a successful transplant. There is the staff of the NMDP, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota but with operations throughout our nation, who manage the flow of information, marrow and cord blood around the world. And there is the staff and medical teams at the transplant and donor centers who use their medical expertise to complete the transplantation procedures.

Finally, there are the true heroes of the program, the patients and donors. Every patient that has sought a transplant has helped the doctors and researchers perfect the marrow or cord blood transplant procedure to improve the outcome for every future patient. And every donor who has signed up for the national registry has given the ultimate gift of life. They are the heroes without whom we would not have this tremendously successful national and international life-saving program.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again thank the sponsors of this Resolution. Let me thank every member of this House for their partnership in helping us continue the work of the National Marrow Donor Program. With your support, we are giving hope to thousands of patients here and throughout the world today and into the future.

I call on my colleagues to continue their support for the National Marrow Donor Program and its important mission. Whether it is working with physicians and patients to find the best source for a transplant, helping a patient navigate the complexities of the health care system and insurance, or encouraging more Americans to become part of the life-saving Registry, the Program has proven itself a critical part of our Nation's health care infrastructure. Today, we proudly support the work of the National Marrow Donor Program during National Marrow Awareness Month and share in the celebration of the program's successes. However, our work is not finished. We must continue to help all Americans in need of umbilical cord blood, bone marrow, or peripheral blood stem cells to have access to the life saving services and the patient advocacy programs of the National Marrow Donor Program.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support House Concurrent Resolution 206 supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation. I commend Mr. BURGESS for introducing this legislation.

The importance of National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) and other bone marrow donor programs cannot be overstated. Each year thousands of people are diagnosed with leukemia or other blood diseases which may be cured through a blood stem cell transplant may be a cure. Some will find a matched donor, but many others will have to rely on the kindness of strangers. For those of African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic,

Native American, Native Alaskan descent, this is especially challenging.

I commend NMDP and other on their education and outreach initiatives particularly those programs aimed at recruiting donors from minority populations. In 1993, the NMDP Registry included 37,601 donors of African-American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, Native Alaskan heritage. As of August 2003, the number is now 1,145,000 donors. This an increase of approximately 3,000 percent. But there is still a critical need for donors from minority populations.

Her name was Justice Taitague, She was one of the 70 percent who could not find a matched donor from among her family members. Sadly, the donor registry at the time could not provide a match. Through the efforts of Dr. Thomas Shieh, the Guam Medical Society, and the National and Hawaiian Marrow Donor Programs, the first ever marrow drive on Guam was held on her behalf. This "Drive for Justice" registered thirty-four hundred volunteers in just three days. But it was too late for Justice, who passed away a few days after the drive.

Justice will never know the impact her life, her story has had on others. She has given us a gift—the gift of understanding of the importance of the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and she has given hope to others of Asian/Pacific Island descent searching for a donor.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support House Concurrent Resolution 206 supporting the National Marrow Donor Program and other bone marrow donor programs and encouraging Americans to learn about the importance of bone marrow donation. For me and the people of Guam, it's a matter of Justice.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 206.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1904, HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 457, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1904) to improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to plan and conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risk lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and