

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

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 692, recognizing September as Tay-Sachs Awareness Month. Tay-Sachs disease affects the lives of almost 1.5 million Americans who are carriers of the disease.

Infants are the most vulnerable to this disease. They appear to develop normally for the first few months of life, but then, as nerve cells become distended with fatty material, a relentless deterioration of mental and physical abilities occurs. These helpless children then become blind, deaf, and unable to swallow. Muscles begin to atrophy. Paralysis sets in. Even with the best of care, children with Tay-Sachs disease usually die by the age of 4 from recurring infections.

A much rarer form of the disorder occurs in patients in their twenties and early thirties and is characterized by an unsteady gait and progressive neurological deterioration.

Unfortunately, the incidence of Tay-Sachs is particularly high among people of Eastern European and Ashkenazi Jewish descent. Patients and carriers of Tay-Sachs disease can be identified by a simple blood test. Parents of high-risk populations are encouraged to have their children screened for this gene.

Presently, there is no treatment for Tay-Sachs disease, but I would like to recognize the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Strokes for their efforts to reduce the burden of this neurological disease. NINDS is part of the National Institutes of Health and conducts research on Tay-Sachs disease in laboratories at the NIH and also supports additional research through grants to major medical institutions across the country.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution, Mr. Speaker, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ARCURI).

Mr. ARCURI. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 692, which recognizes this September 2009 as Tay-Sachs Disease Awareness Month. I'm proud to cosponsor this resolution, and I commend my friend from Ohio, Senator SHERROD BROWN, for spearheading a companion resolution in the Senate.

Tay-Sachs disease is a progressive neurological disorder for which there is no known treatment or cure. The most common form affects infants who appear healthy at birth and seem to develop normally at first, but at around 6 months the symptoms of the disease begin to appear. The baby gradually begins to regress, losing the ability to crawl, turn over, sit, or reach out. Eventually, as paralysis sets in, the

child becomes blind, deaf, and unable to swallow. Tragically, few infants born with Tay-Sachs live past the age of 5.

This terrible disease appears most often in families with no prior history because the Tay-Sachs gene can be carried through many generations without being expressed. However, when two carriers of the gene become parents, there is a one-in-four chance that any child they will have will be born with the disease.

While about 1.5 million Americans are carriers of the Tay-Sachs gene, certain populations are much more at risk. About 1 in every 30 American Jews and 1 in 50 Irish Americans is a carrier. French Canadians, Louisiana Cajuns, and Pennsylvania Dutch are also high-risk populations.

It is easy to reduce this terrible disease like Tay-Sachs to statistics, but there is a human story behind statistics that we must not overlook. My wife's son, Joey Deon, was born a happy, healthy baby. There was no warning he would be afflicted by this terrible disease, but at the age of 1, he began to show symptoms.

His mother, like many parents of children with Tay-Sachs, was the first to notice that something was wrong. She sat through many tests and the awful day they were told that Joey had Tay-Sachs. She was forced to watch a once active healthy, happy baby slowly lose sight, hearing, and muscle control.

Joey passed away in his sleep 1 month before his fifth birthday. We were thankful he died peacefully in his sleep shortly after his mother held him and fed him for the last time. Not all deaths from Tay-Sachs are peaceful. Some can be quite long and agonizing.

Mr. Speaker, a simple blood test can identify carriers of Tay-Sachs genes before they have children, but very few people, including those in high-risk populations, are aware of the availability of this test. This critical and relatively inexpensive test can identify carrier couples before the tragedy occurs. It is a test that my own health insurance, incredibly, did not cover, and I had to pay for myself. But it's a test that primary care physicians should be aware of and discuss with high-risk populations.

Raising awareness of this terrible disease is important, but it is critical that we also put words into actions. Millions of Americans suffering from rare diseases like Tay-Sachs, and more common diseases like cancer, stand to benefit from an expanded Federal commitment to stem cell research. We must also continue to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health. Federal support for cutting-edge biomedical research will make treatments and cures for diseases like Tay-Sachs a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues today to support House Resolution 692 and Tay-Sachs Disease Awareness Month.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 692,

supporting the goals and ideals of Tay-Sachs Awareness Month, and I thank my good friend from New York, Mr. ARCURI, for introducing this important resolution, as well as all of my colleagues who, like me, have added their name as a cosponsor.

Tay-Sachs disease is a rare, genetic disorder that lacks a proven treatment or cure. It attacks the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord of children with fatal results. The deterioration starts at 6 months of age and usually ends with death by age four.

Everyone in this distinguished chamber would agree that this fate should never fall on a child or the parents. Yet this genetic disease disproportionately impacts specific ethnic groups. Approximately 1 in 27 Ashkenazi Jews, 1 in 30 Louisianan Cajuns, 1 in 30 French Canadians, and 1 in 50 Irish Americans are carriers of this gene. If the parents of a child are both carriers of Tay-Sachs disease, then the child has a 1 in 4 chance of developing the disease.

My wife, Dori, and her family were personally affected by this terrible disease. Both parents were carriers, and as a result, my wife's sister developed Tay-Sachs as a baby. It was a terrible tragedy to see a life so young taken from them, and it's a reminder to me that our work here in the United States Congress must include a long-term commitment to curing diseases like Tay-Sachs, so every child can have an opportunity to grow up and live the American Dream.

H. Res. 692 will help in this crusade by bringing important attention to Tay-Sachs disease and supporting the goals and ideals of Tay-Sachs Awareness Month. I thank the lead sponsor, Mr. ARCURI, again for introducing this important resolution and urge its passage.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and so I'm prepared to yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I, too, have no additional speakers, so I would yield back the balance of my time and ask for passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 692, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PALLONE. 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.

HONORING HILLERICH & BRADSBY CO. ON 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF LOUISVILLE SLUGGER

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 314) honoring and saluting Hillerich & Bradsby Co. on the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 314

Whereas John Andrew "Bud" Hillerich made the first Louisville Slugger, originally known as the "Falls City Slugger", for Pete "The Old Gladiator" Browning of the Louisville Eclipse in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1884;

Whereas Hillerich & Bradsby Co. is a fifth-generation, family-owned company celebrating its 125th anniversary;

Whereas today the Louisville Slugger is the Official Bat of Major League Baseball, having had more than 8,500 professional baseball players under contract, beginning in 1905 with Honus Wagner, and including Hall of Fame members such as Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Stan Musial, Mickey Mantle, Jackie Robinson, Roberto Clemente, Hank Aaron, and Louisville's own Pee Wee Reese;

Whereas Hillerich & Bradsby Co. has made over 100,000,000 Louisville Slugger bats in 125 years and currently makes approximately 1,800,000 bats, including souvenir bats, yearly;

Whereas 80 percent of National Baseball Hall of Fame hitters were under contract with Louisville Slugger;

Whereas 60 percent of today's Major League Baseball players use Louisville Slugger bats;

Whereas since 1884, Hillerich & Bradsby Co. has expanded production to include aluminum bats, the PowerBilt golf club, baseball and softball gloves and mitts, hockey sticks, and a variety of anatomical and ergonomic gloves;

Whereas in 1996, Hillerich & Bradsby Co. opened the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, the first museum devoted to hitters, including executive offices, wood bat plant, and a world class museum, in downtown Louisville, just 10 blocks away from where Bud Hillerich made the first Louisville Slugger in 1884; and

Whereas the Louisville Slugger name is synonymous with baseball, evoking excitement and nostalgia among ball players of all ages and skill levels: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates and salutes Hillerich & Bradsby Co. on the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger; and

(2) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make available enrolled copies of this resolution to Hillerich & Bradsby Co. for appropriate display.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of House Resolution 314, honoring and saluting Hillerich & Bradsby Co. on the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger.

Louisville Slugger, as the company is more commonly known, is widely considered an American icon, with a long and treasured record throughout baseball history. But Hillerich & Bradsby Co. began as a little-known small business, just like many small businesses in America today. Only after many years of dedication and refined work did the Louisville Slugger become the cherished bat of countless Americans.

Since its inception, Hillerich & Bradsby has produced approximately 100 million Louisville Sluggers, and currently makes roughly 1.8 million bats a year. Today, the Louisville Slugger is the official bat of Major League Baseball and is used by 60 percent of today's Major League Baseball players. It has also been used by 80 percent of all National Baseball Hall of Fame hitters such as Babe Ruth, Mickey Mantle, Jackie Robinson, Roberto Clemente, and Hank Aaron. It's virtually impossible to witness a ball game and not see a Louisville Slugger bat in use.

I'm pleased to join my colleagues today in congratulating Hillerich & Bradsby Co. on the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TERRY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in saluting Hillerich & Bradsby Co. on the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger. It has been 125 years since Bud Hillerich crafted the very first Louisville Slugger for Pete Browning of the Louisville Eclipse. Since that time, the Louisville Slugger has sold more than 100 million bats, making it without question the most popular bat brand in baseball history.

The Louisville Slugger continues to dominate the game in both wood and aluminum bat categories, with 60 percent of all Major League players currently using the Louisville Slugger. Because the average Major League Baseball player goes through more than 100 bats in a season, each year more than 1 million bats are made at its factory in Louisville. At the factory's peak production, they are able to produce 1,500 bats to a specific player's request per day.

The factory in downtown Louisville is much more than just your average factory and carries with it an air of tradition and nostalgia from Hall of Fame players like Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and even today's pros like Kevin Youkilis and Derek Jeter.

In 1996, the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory was opened to the public, and it's hard to miss the museum's 120-foot-tall Louisville Slugger that leans onto the brick building. Once inside of the museum, tourists are able to witness the entire process of creating a wooden bat from northern white ash or maple, test different model bats in a batting cage, and read about the history of players from the past.

□ 1200

In recent years, Louisville Slugger has gone far beyond bats, providing

performance technology in the form of fielding and batting gloves, helmets, catchers' gear, equipment bags, training aids and accessories. In addition to its on-field performance products, Louisville Slugger offers personalized, miniature, commemorative and collectible bats. Perhaps we'll see one here soon. I would like to commend the Hillerich & Bradsby Company on their 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger and applaud the great success they've had with on-field performance products.

I would also like to recognize Congressman YARMUTH of Kentucky for his work on this resolution and hope that many more vacationers will enjoy the museum and factory tour experience. I stand in support of this legislation and hope that my colleagues will join me.

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the sponsor of the legislation, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH).

Mr. YARMUTH. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey, and I also thank the gentleman from Nebraska for his kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of a genuine American icon, a piece of history that was instrumental in the development of the great American pastime, a tool that helped make ballplayers into folk heroes, and a treasure that gave every kid with a dream the chance to hold a piece of the big leagues in their very hands.

Today we consider H. Res. 314, a resolution to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Louisville Slugger, the official bat of Major League Baseball, manufactured by Hillerich & Bradsby in their beautiful factory in downtown Louisville, Kentucky. The Louisville Slugger is synonymous with the crack of the bat on a summer afternoon, and it is forever linked to the greatest who ever played the game of baseball. Eighty percent of the inductees in the Baseball Hall of Fame swung a Louisville Slugger, 60 percent of all Major Leaguers do the same today.

On the label of every Louisville Slugger is the number 125 because the wood from white ash trees grown in Pennsylvania and New York, wood known for its strength and resiliency, is graded at 125. Now that number takes on additional significance, marking 125 years since the first Louisville Slugger was produced.

The story goes that back in 1884, Pete Browning, the star player on the Louisville Eclipse baseball club, broke his bat in the middle of a hitting slump. Then 17-year-old Bud Hillerich invited Browning back to his father's woodworking shop with a promise of a new hand-crafted bat. Hillerich's creation suited Browning perfectly, and Browning had three hits the very next game, bragging about his fortune to his teammates who soon swarmed Hillerich's woodworking shop to get a bat of their own. After a little persuading, Bud Hillerich convinced his father to focus

on bat-making full time, and the company made the change from producing stair rails and butter churns to Louisville Sluggers.

Thousands of ballplayers of every age have since swung the Louisville Slugger at every level of the game, including many of the all-time greats: Ty Cobb, Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Jackie Robinson, Roberto Clemente, Hank Aaron and Louisville's own, Pee Wee Reese.

Each player specified the measurements for the bat they wanted, and Louisville Slugger developed a unique model that was their own. Ted Williams, one of the greatest hitters of all time, personally traveled to the factory in Louisville throughout his career to pick out his bats. Not by coincidence, he broke the coveted .400 batting average barrier in three seasons and had a career average of .344. Ted acknowledged that he had a little help, famously saying, "I would have been a .290 hitter without Louisville Slugger."

This resolution is a commemoration of the legacy of the Louisville Slugger but also the success of Hillerich & Bradsby, a company that remains committed to Louisville after 125 years. That commitment translates into a lasting impact on our region, with the jobs the company creates at its factory and museum and the economic benefit that comes from thousands of visitors who travel to Louisville every year to see the place where the Slugger is made. Louisvillians take great pride in the fact that the slugger is created in our own backyard, and all of us should take great pride in a company that was built 125 years ago on the American spirit of entrepreneurship and is, itself, now one of our great American icons.

I am honored to celebrate the legacy of the Louisville Slugger and the Hillerich & Bradsby Company, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. TERRY. I think for the TV viewers, it's important to note that Mr. YARMUTH isn't that short. It's that the bat is that big.

Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Having no additional speakers, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 314.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DELAYING MEDICARE ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENT DATE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 3663) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to delay the date on which the accreditation requirement under the Medicare Program applies to suppliers of durable medical equipment that are pharmacies.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3663

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF MEDICARE DME ACCREDITATION DEADLINE FOR CERTAIN PHARMACIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1834(a)(20)(F)(i) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(a)(20)(F)(i)) is amended by inserting before the semicolon the following: “, except that the Secretary shall not require under this clause pharmacies to obtain such accreditation before January 1, 2010”.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed as affecting the application of an accreditation requirement for pharmacies to qualify for bidding in a competitive acquisition area under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-3).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

Presently under Medicare, pharmacies supply Medicare beneficiaries with durable medical equipment, or DME, such as canes, crutches and diabetes testing strips. Pharmacists not only provide access to these items but also provide critical services, such as counseling on patient compliance and adherence, which often results in improved health outcomes.

In spite of the important and positive role that many pharmacists play in the Medicare DME program, in the past there has been a lot of fraud and abuse that has occurred in the world of DME supply. Accordingly, Congress stepped in and imposed new requirements on DME suppliers that would help rout out fraud, waste and abuse. One of the requirements is to require suppliers of durable medical equipment to obtain quality accreditation by October 1, 2009, or this Thursday, tomorrow.

Requiring DME suppliers to be accredited would help ensure that the integrity of the Medicare program is protected and makes sure that beneficiaries have access to quality services and supplies. Unfortunately, as pharmacists have tried to comply with this

new requirement, those charged with providing accreditation have been unable to keep up with the demand.

Accordingly, a backlog of applications now exists, and there is little hope of having them completed by this week's deadline. If we do nothing, Mr. Speaker, countless pharmacies across the country will be left in limbo, possibly causing problems for beneficiaries seeking to access the DME supplies that they need. Congress should do everything it can to avoid this kind of disruption. The health reform bill provides some relief in this area, but its details are still being worked out.

That's why I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense measure which will temporarily delay the accreditation requirement from taking effect. Congress can fine-tune the health care reform legislation to address any remaining problems after January 1, which is the new deadline.

I want to thank my colleague on the Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. SPACE of Ohio, for spearheading this effort, as well as Representatives JO ANN EMERSON, MARION BERRY and JERRY MORAN.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 3663, a bill to delay the date for accreditation of durable medical equipment suppliers for 90 days. I want to thank my colleague from Ohio (Mr. SPACE) for bringing this legislation to the floor today and to correct a provision in the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. That law, which was approved by the House last year, required suppliers of durable medical equipment, DME, to get accreditation before applying to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to meet the quality standards before being awarded a contract under the Medicare DMEPOS competitive bidding program. The law carved out an exemption for certain physicians and other treating practitioners and also gave the Secretary of HHS the authority to exempt others.

By regulation, CMS determined that pharmacists would fall under this exemption and not be required to obtain accreditation in order to sell durable medical equipment to consumers. Brick and mortar pharmacies, however, would be subject to CMS accreditation under the CMS rules.

The bill would fix this problem and extend the period of time for CMS to complete the accreditation process for those pharmacies that have filed their paperwork. The bill also includes language clarifying that the 90-day extension would not apply to those suppliers wishing to participate in competitive bidding for certain durable medical equipment.

The issue that is facing us here today is that only about 43 percent of the pharmacies have actually had their inspection and review, leaving 50 percent of them out there dangling because of