

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 81

BY REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMANN AND SENATOR WALSWORTH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to post information concerning bone marrow donations on the department's website for dissemination by healthcare practitioners to patients.

WHEREAS, since 1987, when the United States Congress authorized the establishment of a national registry of volunteer bone marrow donors, the National Marrow Donor Program, now publicly known as Be The Match, has facilitated more than seventy-four thousand marrow and umbilical cord blood transplants; and

WHEREAS, Be The Match states that the number of transplants facilitated through the national Be The Match Registry is only a fraction of the people who can benefit; and

WHEREAS, one of the leading hurdles cited in a report by the Government Accountability Office is locating a suitably matched, unrelated donor, a process that is often difficult, time-consuming, and costly; and

WHEREAS, seventy percent of patients do not have a donor in their family and rely upon the national registry to find a match; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to enhance the understanding of the importance of bone marrow donation, and to encourage residents of Louisiana to participate in bone marrow donation drives; and

WHEREAS, the most prevalent problem with respect to bone marrow donation is the need for racially and ethnically diverse donors because of complex tissue types; and

WHEREAS, of the more than thirteen million five hundred thousand potential donors on the national Be The Match Registry, forty percent are donors from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to engage the public to increase diversity in the registry, with the goal of finding a matching donor for all patients to receive the transplant they need, when they need it; and

WHEREAS, the bone marrow registration process is simple as it only takes a few minutes and requires a cheek swab; and

WHEREAS, a bone marrow transplant may be the best treatment option or the only potential for a cure for patients with leukemia, lymphoma, sickle cell anemia, and many other diseases; and

WHEREAS, as the science of transplant continues to advance, new diseases are being treated with bone marrow transplants; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 40:1263.2 established the Louisiana Organ Transplant Assistance Program within the office of the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, through the program, the department educates residents of Louisiana about the need for bone marrow donors, the procedures required to become registered as a potential bone marrow donor, including the procedures for determining the person's tissue type, and the medical procedures a donor must undergo to donate bone marrow or other sources of blood stem cells and the attendant risks of the procedure; and

WHEREAS, the department is also directed to make special efforts to educate and recruit minority populations to volunteer as potential bone marrow donors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to post information concerning bone marrow donations on the department's website for dissemination by healthcare practitioners to patients.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the information to be placed on the department's website shall include but not be limited to all of the following:

- (1) The need for bone marrow donations.
- (2) Patient populations that would benefit from bone marrow donations.
- (3) How to join the national bone marrow registry.
- (4) How to acquire a free buccal swab kit from the national bone marrow registry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature does hereby urge and request all healthcare practitioners to provide this life-saving information to patients.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

---

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

---

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE