Dr. Bob Morris and his team at the Helen Keller Foundation. Dr. Morris devotes weeks of each year to restoring sight of children who have lost their sight and is actually a miracle worker today giving the gift of sight.

Dr. Terry Graham, president of the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, and Lynne Hanner from the Institute.

Among the members who served on the Helen Keller Campaign and the Artist Selection Committee, the Alabama delegation is honored to have three members of the Keller family: great nephew Bill Johnson, great nephew Warren Johnson, and great grand niece Keller Johnson Thompson.

And, of course, finally we recognize the outstanding work of the artist, Edward Hlavka.

We all look forward to the formal unveiling of the Helen Keller statue next Wednesday. It will be a powerful moment for those of us from the State of Alabama at our beautiful Capitol.

Let me thank Senator SESSIONS and Senator SHELBY for their support of this resolution.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers who are here, so let me just say that I rise in support of this resolution.

Helen Keller is not only a tremendous symbol of the State of Alabama and the United States, but it's not just her history that we reflect on today, it is her inspiration for those of us who are alive today.

There are some in our society—I remember Professor Peter Singer—who have suggested that some infants are not worthy of our support as human beings because they are less than the rest of us. I've often wondered if it is our failure to be able to unlock that vault in which some children find themselves where they're unable to communicate to us. And if we reflect back on Helen Keller's life, Helen Keller had that greatness within her at all times. It was the inability of the outside world to be able to communicate with her as much as it was her inability to communicate with the outside world. That should be a lesson for all of us that no child is unworthy in our society and that sometimes when we do not understand their worth, it may be our loss rather than theirs.

Think what would have happened if that great teacher of Helen Keller hadn't taken the time to be able to unlock that vault and be able to begin to communicate with that young girl. Not only how differently would Helen Keller's life had turned out, but how differently the plight of the disabled in this country and around the world would have been.

So let us not just think of Helen Keller as a historic figure for which we give her homage today and for which we will honor her with this statue, but let's think of her as a living memorial of the challenge to all of us to reach beyond that which is easy to find out the greatness that lies within every individual.

So I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank Chairman BRADY and the delegation of Alabama for taking up this resolution. I urge my colleagues to join me in support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. I also thank the gentleman for his cooperation in everything we do in our committee. I do think that Helen Keller will be a great addition to Statuary Hall.

Some wise old lady told me years ago that when someone gives you lemons, you turn them into lemonade, and that's exactly what that lady did. That statue in Statuary Hall will be an inspiration to all of us.

With that, I support the resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 41, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1145

SUPPORTING TAY-SACHS AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 692) supporting the goals and ideals of Tay-Sachs Awareness Month, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 692

Whereas Tay-Sachs disease is a rare, genetic disorder that causes destruction of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord due to the poor functioning of an enzyme called hexosaminidase A;

Whereas there is no proven treatment or cure for Tay-Sachs disease, which is usually fatal in children;

Whereas the disorder was named after Warren Tay, an ophthalmologist from the United Kingdom, and Bernard Sachs, a neurologist from the United States, both of whom contributed to the discovery of the disease in 1881 and 1887, respectively;

Whereas Tay-Sachs disease often affects families with no prior history of the disease;

Whereas approximately 1 in 27 Ashkenazi Jews, 1 in 30 Louisianan Cajuns, 1 in 30 French Canadians, 1 in 50 Irish Americans, and 1 in every 250 people are carriers of Tay-Sachs disease;

Whereas approximately 1,500,000 Americans are carriers of Tay-Sachs disease;

Whereas these unaffected carriers of the disease possess the recessive gene that can trigger the disease in future generations;

Whereas if both parents of a child are carriers of Tay-Sachs disease, there is a 1 in 4 chance that the child will develop Tay-Sachs disease;

Whereas a simple and inexpensive blood test can determine if an individual is a carrier of Tay-Sachs disease, and screening for this disease should be available when clinically indicated; and

Whereas heightened awareness and public-private partnerships to find a treatment are effective ways to combat this horrific disease: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of Tay-Sachs Awareness Month and supports a public-private partnership for education and research efforts with respect to Tay-Sachs disease.

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.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 692, supporting the goals and ideals of Tay-Sachs Awareness Month. Tay-Sachs disease is a very rare genetic disorder that leads to the destruction of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. The disease is prevalent in Ashkenazi Jews, French Canadians, Louisianan Cajuns, and Irish Americans. One in 250 Americans are carriers of the disease. If both parents are carriers, there's a one in four chance that a child born will suffer from Tay-Sachs.

This is a terrible and unforgiving disease that strikes so early in life the victims don't have much of a chance. As young as 6 months old, children start presenting symptoms. They stop developing and start losing motor and mental skills, ultimately leading to paralysis and death. There's no treatment that can stop the progression of this disease. There's no cure. Because of this, Tay-Sachs is always fatal. Most children do not survive past the age of 4.

Prevention is the only remedy, and that can be accomplished through education and information. A simple blood test can indicate if a person is a carrier. With this knowledge, parents can be better prepared and aware of the chances that they have a child with this terrible disease.

The resolution before us today supports heightened awareness about and increased research on this disease. I'd like to thank my colleague, Representative ARCURI, for his work in raising this important issue. I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution.

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.