

today under the expedited suspension procedure.

I must stress we have had several days to examine these bills, and they have been on the floor schedule for some time and they are noncontroversial. They are also important pieces of legislation.

We recently celebrated National Donor Day to encourage people to become organ donors. Today we will pass legislation to promote National Donor Day and help States organize their organ donor programs.

We will also honor, unfortunately, 21 members of the National Guard who died last week in the line of duty.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this rule and urge my colleagues to do the same. By passing this rule, we will improve organ donation programs and hopefully save some more lives.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, Democrats have no objection to this rule, which will allow the consideration of three bills under suspension today. Those bills include a concurrent resolution honoring the 21 members of the Virginia National Guard who were killed in a plane crash on March 3. I know firsthand how important the National Guard is to our national defense, and the tragic and untimely death of these fine Americans is tribute to the dedication and selfless service so many Americans make each year through their service in the National Guard.

The rule also permits the consideration of measures designed to promote organ donation, something Democrats on the Committee on Rules know about through the brave testimony of our ranking member, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY).

However, Mr. Speaker, I must take a moment to express our grave concerns about what may happen in the Committee on Rules some time later today. I am referring to the rule the Committee on Rules may report on the tax bill and how whether the majority will deny Democrats of all stripes the opportunity to offer alternatives to the Republican tax bill.

Mr. Speaker, we must object in the strongest possible terms to any plans the majority may have to cut off the ability of Members to offer one or more substitutes to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, not only are we going to consider a tax bill of huge proportion and consequences without the ability to offer alternatives, we are going to consider it without the benefit of having debated a budget which would place this tax cut in context with the other matters this government funds.

We are going to consider a tax cut without fully understanding what its implications are on the rest of the Federal budget. So not only have we not received a budget from the new President, we have no congressional guide-

lines in place to help the Members of this body determine which priorities are more important.

Is it cutting taxes a lot, some or not at all? Is it paying down the national debt, which, I remind my colleagues, is a debt that is collectively owed by all the people of our great Nation?

Is it funding education, improving our schools, reducing class size or funding new teachers? Is it providing a real Medicare prescription drug benefit for our seniors, shoring up Social Security and Medicare or improving our national defense forces? No one knows the answer to those questions, Mr. Speaker.

Democrats in this House are very concerned that the Republican majority seems to not be concerned in the least that we are blindly proceeding down a path we have been on once before.

Mr. Speaker, I would just remind my colleagues, most of whom were not Members when we last considered a tax cut of these proportions, of the old adage, the definition of insanity is repeating the same actions and expecting different results. There are many of us here who fear we will see the same results as we saw after the passage of the 1981 tax bill.

Mr. Speaker, I support this rule, but Democrats on the Committee on Rules and in the Caucus at large want to go on notice right now that we believe it is imperative, if we are not to proceed in regular order in this body, that our Members be given a chance to be heard. All this talk of bipartisanship is meaningless, Mr. Speaker, if there are no actions behind the words.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleagues that this rule is not about a tax cut.

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

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

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING IMPORTANCE OF ORGAN, TISSUE, BONE MARROW AND BLOOD DONATION AND SUP- PORTING NATIONAL DONOR DAY

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 31) expressing the sense of the Congress regarding the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation and supporting National Donor Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 31

Whereas more than 70,000 individuals await organ transplants at any given moment;

Whereas another man, woman, or child is added to the national organ transplant waiting list every 20 minutes;

Whereas despite the progress in the last 15 years, more than 15 people per day die because of a shortage of donor organs;

Whereas almost everyone is a potential organ, tissue, and blood donor;

Whereas transplantation has become an element of mainstream medicine that prolongs and enhances life;

Whereas for the fourth consecutive year, a coalition of health organizations is joining forces for National Donor Day;

Whereas the first three National Donor Days raised a total of nearly 25,000 units of blood, added over 4,000 potential donors to the National Marrow Donor Program Registry, and distributed tens of thousands of organ and tissue pledge cards;

Whereas National Donor Day is America's largest one-day organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation event; and

Whereas a number of businesses, foundations, health organizations, and the Department of Health and Human Services have designated February 10, 2001, as National Donor Day: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) supports the goals and ideas of National Donor Day;

(2) encourages all Americans to learn about the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation and to discuss such donation with their families and friends; and

(3) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to conduct appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate support for organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation.

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 insert extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 31.

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.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 31, a resolution regarding the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow and blood donation

and supporting National Donor Day. I want to commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN), for her work on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 31 recognizes the critical need for increased organ donation and acknowledges the success of past National Donor Days. The resolution expresses congressional support for the goals and ideas of National Donor Day, and it encourages all Americans to learn about the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow and blood donation.

I am pleased that the Health and Human Services Secretary, Tommy Thompson, has recognized the serious nature of this growing problem and stated that improving organ donation is a priority for his first 100 days in office. Secretary Thompson has indicated that he will focus on ways to significantly increase organ donation in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we know that measures such as the resolution before us will help the Secretary in his efforts. In addition, we can all participate in efforts to promote organ donation in our own communities. By working together to increase organ donation, we can help save thousands of lives. I urge all Members to join me in supporting passage of H. Con. Res. 31.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the help of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), my ranking member, in this resolution.

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 am pleased to be a cosponsor of this resolution and the Organ Donation Improvement Act, which we will also take up today.

I commend first and, most importantly, the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN) for her good work on this, as well as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. BARRETT) highlighting the substantial unmet need for donated organs.

This resolution highlights the need not only for organ donation, but for tissue, blood and bone marrow donations as well.

There are 1,298 patients currently waiting for organs at northeast Ohio hospitals in my part of Ohio; 800 patients waiting for a kidney, 140 patients for a heart, 60 patients waiting for a lung.

A single donor can provide organs and tissue to more than 50 people in need.

March is Red Cross Month and the spotlight on this organization could not, Mr. Speaker, be more timely.

Despite 6.3 million units of blood collected from 4 million generous donors in the year 2000, blood supplies are at a record low across our country. Awareness is the first critical step in addressing the country's life-saving donation needs. The resolution of the gentle-

woman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN) makes Congress a leader in this awareness campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for yielding the time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add my strong support to H. Con. Res. 31, a sense of the Congress resolution supporting National Donor Day.

I want to congratulate the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN), my colleague who introduced this, and I want to congratulate the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), who brought it forward to the House.

Every family hopes that if one of its members becomes seriously ill, medical science will be able to provide a miracle and restore their loved ones to a healthy and rewarding life. Medical science has been able to do exactly that over the past decade for hundreds of thousands of families with loved ones suffering from diseases and injuries that affect the heart, the kidney, pancreas, lungs, liver or tissue.

Transplantation of organs and tissues has become one of the most remarkable success stories in medicine, now giving tens of thousands of desperately ill Americans each year a new chance at life.

But sadly, this medical miracle is not yet available to all in need. Waiting lists are growing more rapidly than the number of organs and tissues that are being donated. There are more than 70,000 individuals awaiting organ transplants at any given moment, and despite the fact that almost every one who is a potential donor, more than 10 people each day die because of a shortage of donor organs.

Currently, 2,566 men, women and children from the greater metropolitan area are on waiting lists hoping for an organ to become available. That is an increase of 108 over the previous year. Many of these residents have been waiting for years, and the wait is growing longer.

Every 2 hours one of the more than 60,000 Americans now on waiting lists dies for lack of an available organ. And even when individuals have indicated a desire to be a donor, statistics show that those wishes go unfulfilled more than half the time.

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Two important points I think could well be made, and that is the final decision on whether or not to donate organs and tissue is always made by surviving family members. Checking the organ donation box on a driver's license does not guarantee organ and tissue donation. Individuals should dis-

cuss the importance of donation with their families now in a non-crisis atmosphere so if the question arises, all members of the family will remember having made the decision to give the gift of life.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution encourages all Americans to learn about the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow and blood donation and to discuss such donations with their families and friends. I heartily support it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just jump ahead and stress my strong support for a bill that is coming up, H.R. 624, the Organ Donation Improvement Act, which would direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a program to educate the public with respect to organ donation; in particular, the need for additional organs for transplantation. The measure specifically recognizes the very generous contribution made by each living individual who has donated an organ to save a life. It also acknowledges the advances in medical technology that have enabled transplantation of organs donated by living individuals to become a viable treatment option for an increasing number of patients.

I know in this Congress we have had several Members who have benefited from organ transplants. Mr. Speaker, with the passage of this legislation that will follow, this may well be the first day of someone's life, and let Congress vote for the future.

I must thank my colleagues who have worked so very hard on this and all of the other medical issues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), and all of my colleagues who have contributed their commitment, their time and energy towards this legislation.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), whose subcommittee has been a leader in this area; and I certainly thank the chairman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), a colleague of mine from Florida, who joins me in districts. We recognize the concern and the interest in this issue not only in our districts, but in and around the country.

Mr. Speaker, I also appreciate the statement of the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA). It is good to see my colleagues from Ohio, Maryland, Florida, along with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. BARRETT). This is a national issue.

I would like to take just a moment first of all, though, to recognize a colleague of ours, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY). His story is touching. He has dedicated his life to serving the people of Boston. He

was not deterred from service 6 years ago when he needed, among other things, a liver transplant. He was not deterred when his family was undergoing a crisis. Now he is forced to face another crisis, and again he will continue his public service. When the gentleman from Massachusetts was told by his doctor to take off time to do something he enjoys, his response was inspiring to all of us. He said, "Doctor, I am doing what I enjoy doing. There is nothing else I would rather do."

And it was the gift of an organ and utter determination that have allowed the gentleman from Massachusetts to lead the life that he is leading.

Mr. Speaker, organ donation falls into the category of things that one never thinks will affect you, your friends, your neighbors or your family. It happens to other people. In this Congress alone there are several Members who have undergone successful organ transplants, and we are thankful that these fine people are with us today. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) are two of the lucky ones.

My husband, John, was also one of the lucky ones. His successful transplant not only gave John a new lease on life, but it has also given my children back a father and me a loving husband.

Mr. Speaker, we are not alone. Four-year-old Hannah Jones from Gainesville, Florida, received the gift of life through donated umbilical cord blood. Without this gift, Hannah would not have survived her bout with leukemia. Every year thousands of Americans wait on the organ donation list, and they are dependent on those kind enough to give and those who are aware that there is a need.

Transplantation is extremely successful, and people can live productive lives with a transplanted organ. However, because of this technology, even more people have been added to the national waiting list. Sadly, the number of donors has not grown as fast as the number of people waiting for organs. Even with the growing number of transplants performed on average, there is an increase in the number of patients on the national waiting list every day.

Today there are more than 70,000 people waiting for organ transplants and at least 15 people die each day while waiting for an organ. In simple terms, the biggest problem facing transplant patients is the shortage of organs. One way that we can help address this health care crisis is to talk to our friends and families about the importance of organ and tissue donation; and do not forget to let those friends and family know at the hospital what it means and why you have chosen to give an organ because it can be a problem if you do not.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to ask my colleagues and others for their help. We need to work to-

gether to increase awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation. I ask my colleagues to join in passing H. Con. Res. 31, a resolution that recognizes and supports National Donor Day.

National Donor Day is organized by Saturn and the United Auto Workers along with a number of organ foundations, health organizations, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

They have established February 10, 2001 as the day. This day is dedicated to educating people about the five points of life: whole and blood platelets, organs and tissue, bone marrow, and cord blood.

Last month, this coalition joined forces for the fourth time to bring us together for a National Donor Day. This is America's largest one-day donation event held just before Valentine's Day. The first three donor days raised a total of 25,000 units of blood, added over 4,000 potential donors to the National Marrow Donor Registry and distributed tens of thousands of organ and tissue pledge cards.

You and I, your friends and families can participate in this historic event by giving blood or pledging to give blood, volunteering with the National Marrow Donor Program, filling out donor and tissue donation pledge cards and agreeing to discuss the decision with family members.

I would also like to take a moment to thank those people and groups of the Fifth District of Florida, including the Saturn car dealership in Gainesville owned by Mr. Roland Daniels; along with LifeSouth Community Blood Centers, also in Gainesville; and other groups and individuals for pulling together to host a donation event on National Donor Day.

I urge everyone to talk to their friends and families about the importance of organ donation and to let others know about this year's National Organ Donor Day.

While this day has already come and gone, every day holds the promise of life for the thousands of people who await organ transplants like the one 4-year-old Hannah Jones received.

Please support this resolution.

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) who has a very interesting and wonderful story to tell.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank both the chairman and the ranking member for their support on this resolution.

Today I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 31, which expresses the sense of Congress regarding the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation and supports a National Donor Day.

Currently about 73,000 patients nationwide await organ transplants, and some 12 die each day while waiting.

Every 14 minutes, another name is added to the national transplant waiting list. An average of 16 people die each day from the lack of available organs for transplant.

In 1999, there were 5,843 organ donors resulting in 21,990 organ transplants. Less than one-third, about 20,000, receive transplants each year. While the number of donors rose in 1998 to nearly 5,800, with about three organs recovered from each donor, it still falls short, Mr. Speaker, short of the substantial and growing need.

Today, I have two nephews who are undergoing surgery for the transplanting of kidneys, Lamont and Galan. We wish them the very best as they undergo this very important undertaking.

I say to my colleagues today that there is an important need for organ donations, one that will help the survival of families. Lives are saved because of the generosity of those who donate their organs. I strongly support this resolution and urge my friends to do so as well.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I support H. Con. Res. 31, which expresses the sense of the House of the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donation. In an age of unprecedented scientific advances in medical and behavioral sciences, it is important that we utilize every means at our disposal to save human lives.

Each year organ donations save lives—thousands of lives; and scientific surveys indicate that Americans overwhelmingly support organ donation. Despite this fact, the same surveys indicate that Americans are reluctant to donate their organs. This is particularly true among people of color, and even more so for all groups with regard to the donation of bone marrow.

Interestingly, the major reason for which respondents indicate reluctance to donate their organs is that they have not given the issue much thought. Herein lies our opportunity to do some good. We must support efforts to educate our constituencies about the necessity of organ, tissue, and bone marrow donation, and the good that these gifts can do. Because gifts are indeed what they are.

Just as we use the most modern tools medical science has provided to successfully transplant donated organs and tissue, we must use the tools behavioral science has provided us to change the attitudes of Americans about the necessity of this medical procedure—a procedure which saves the lives of more than 50,000 Americans each year. The lives of many Americans hang in the balance.

H. Con. Res. 31 is a good start in this regard, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, in Asian-Pacific American communities throughout the nation, parents are known to overrule decisions of their children, even if their children are grown adults with families of their own. That cultural norm compounded with cultural and religious stigma surrounding tissue or organ donations and the complexities of Eastern versus Western values and medicine

makes it difficult for families to accept the decisions of individual family members who wish to be donors. Even with a living will provided by a donor, the final decision of whether to make a donation is made by the surviving family. Thus, the need for such public awareness and outreach activities is a vital component of raising the potential matching success for those thousands of patients waiting for transplants and encouraging the recruitment of new donors.

At any given day of the year, there are between 1,000 and 2,000 patients awaiting organ or tissue transplants throughout the nation. Of the 30,000 individuals that are diagnosed with leukemia each year, 6 percent of these are of Asian-Pacific American ancestry. The slim probabilities of finding a perfect match for many of these patients are often bleak.

Just 10 years ago, the possibility of finding a match in the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) was virtually nonexistent with only 123 Asian Pacific American donors listed on the National Registry. As of December 3, 2001, there were 257,000 donors of Asian-Pacific American ancestry out of 4.2 million currently registered in the NMDP. Although the radically increased numbers represent a degree of success, only 25 percent of those needing a bone marrow transplant are unable to find a perfect donor. With the estimated attrition of 10 percent of potential donors from the NMDP each year, the need to keep focused on recruitment and retention of donors in the program is critical to its continued success.

The continued support of Congress to improve upon the program it created in the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984 is critical to the continued success of national programs such as the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network and the National Marrow Donor Program.

Therefore, I urge my fellow colleagues to join in the support of this critical legislation which serves the needs of every American citizen of this nation, from the 50 states to the 5 territories. Furthermore, I would like to extend my appreciation to Mr. BILIRAKIS for introducing this legislation which addresses the particular needs and improves this important program.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 31, a resolution honoring National Donor Day, and I'd like to thank Congresswoman THURMAN for bringing this issue to the Congress' attention.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, I received a liver transplant nearly 6 years ago. Without that transplant, I would not have lived more than a few months. These last 6 years have been some of the best years of my life—and for that and so much more, I am deeply grateful. I am deeply grateful to the family—who I will never know—who courageously decided to donate their loved ones' organs so that someone like me would have a second chance.

I am deeply grateful to the doctors and nurses who performed my operation, so professionally and so successfully.

And I am deeply grateful to the scientists and researchers who have worked so hard to develop the techniques and procedures that are giving so many people a better, longer, and healthier life.

I stand here today as one of the lucky people that was given the opportunity to receive

an organ transplant. Unfortunately, so many others across this country will not have that opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, while 20,000 people will receive a transplant this year, another 40,000 that desperately need an organ will not. That gives me, and I hope all of my colleagues, a great desire to work to raise awareness about organ donation, and improve the procedures for obtaining a transplant.

Mr. Speaker, if there ever was a time or issue where government should and can act—this is that issue.

We can literally save lives by improving the structure of organ donation across the country. We can make it easier for families to make the choice of donating an organ, we can make transplant surgery more accessible to all Americans and we can teach everyone that their courageous choice will give another human being the greatest gift of all—the gift of life.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that this House will also be taking up a bill today offered by Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. BARRETT, H.R. 624, and I want to lend my strong support for that legislation as well. Mr. BILIRAKIS' and Mr. BARRETT'S bill will direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out a program to educate the public on organ donation and it will provide funding for travel expenses of individuals making a living donation of an organ.

The bill will also provide assistance to states to improve donor registries, and make those important registries available to hospitals and donor organizations. These are excellent measures that will strengthen organ donation and I urge the House to pass H.R. 624 when we consider that legislation later today.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I am among the lucky individuals to have been given the gift of life through an organ transplant.

I hope we can join together in this nation to give many, many more Americans that same gift.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my colleague from the Ways and Means Committee, Representative KAREN THURMAN, in support of this resolution that extends the message that Congress supports the goals of National Donor Day and urges the President to issue a proclamation calling on the nation to conduct appropriation activities and programs to support increased organ donation.

February 10, 2001 was the fourth National Donor Day organized by Saturn and the United Auto Workers. To date, the successful efforts of the groups involved have resulted in over 4,000 potential donors being added to the National Marrow Donor Program Registry, over 25,000 units of blood being collected, and tens of thousands of organ and tissue pledge cards being distributed.

Last year's events included an emphasis on the disproportionately high need for minority donors. Recipients often need an organ from a donor of the same ethnicity, and organ donation among minorities has historically been lower than the rest of the population, making minorities less likely to find a matching donor. We need to continue such efforts to reach out to minorities and encourage them to become donors.

There are still over 70,000 people on the transplant waiting list. We need to reemphasize our commitment to the National Donor Day and the importance of organ, tissue, and

blood donation. We also need to put more resources into programs with similar goals to take steps toward making each day a national donor day.

I urge President Bush to join us in these efforts to encourage people to give the gift of life, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I speak today in full support of House Concurrent Resolution 31, which expresses the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow, and blood donations and celebrates National Donor Day. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague, Congresswoman KAREN THURMAN of Florida, for her continued leadership and sponsorship of this resolution.

The need for blood, bone marrow, organ and tissue donation grows each year. So, do the concerns regarding access to these supplies, which are of a particular concern to rural areas such as Guam. Guam's distance from the states and geographical isolation forces hospitals to become almost solely dependent on the local population to supply its demand for donations.

With the anticipated closing of the Naval Hospital Blood Bank, the Blood Bank in the Guam Memorial Hospital, the only civilian hospital on the island, will become the sole provider of blood products on the island. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that supplies of local blood products, including packed red blood cells, plasma and platelets, are regularly replenished and that the supply is enough to meet the needs in the event of a disaster or emergency situation.

Local blood donations ensure the ready availability of certain blood products, which are difficult to obtain from off-island vendors or providers. Local donations ensure the availability of all blood products for patient care in the event of increased emergency usage. This allows Guam Memorial Hospital to increase the provision of certain procedures and services for patients locally, rather than having to medically evacuate patients to Hawaii or the continental United States for these types of procedures.

In observance of Blood Donor Month in Guam, I donated two pints of blood at the Guam Memorial Hospital Blood Bank. The staff at the Blood Bank were kind enough to make me feel comfortable during the 45 minutes it took for the blood to be drawn. At this time, I would like to extend my thanks to Glendalyn Pangelinan, the Blood Bank supervisor; Victoria Pangelinan, the Blood Donation recruiter; and the Blood Bank technicians, Wilma Nisperos, Priscilla Quinata, Charlotte Mier, and Lois Santa Cruz, who assisted me during the whole experience.

Because of Guam's unique geographic situation, it is a continual challenge to ensure that an adequate amount of safe blood products are constantly available. An active blood donation program is critical in keeping the community continually educated and aware of this vital need.

Although organ, tissue, and bone marrow transplantation is not a common procedure in Guam as it is in larger metropolitan areas of the country, the need is still great as heart disease and diabetes are among the leading causes of death on the island. In fact, heart disease ranks as the number one killer, while diabetes ranks very close to the top and affects Chamorros at 5 times the national average.

The impact of higher costs and greater distances between Guam and the nearest major metropolitan hospital in Honolulu, approximately 3,500 miles or 7 hours by plane, is a vital concern when it comes to health care for U.S. citizens on Guam. Some of Guam's patients are medically evacuated to larger metropolitan health care centers in Honolulu and Los Angeles for these procedures. Other times, the organ and tissue donations are transported to Guam for transplantation. So, the access to organ and tissue donation is a critical component of whether a patient lives or dies.

Although donations of organs, tissue and bone marrow are not as frequent as donations of blood products, the needs are the same, only the distance and costs to accessing these products are much greater. The continued support of Congress in these efforts to improve access and public awareness of the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow and blood donations is critical to meeting the needs of those 70,000 individuals who are waiting for organ transplants at any given moment, for car crash victims in need of a ready supply of blood, and for patients afflicted with leukemia in need of a bone marrow transplant just to survive.

Therefore, today I rise in strong support of this resolution and encourage all Americans, whether they live in the 50 states or the 5 territories to make a donation of blood to their local blood bank, sign up as an organ donor at their nearest Division of Motor Vehicles, and register at the nearest Bone Marrow Registry Center in the area. Your donation is vital and may help save a life some day.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). 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, H. Con. Res. 31.

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. BILIRAKIS. 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.

#### ORGAN DONATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 624) to amend the Public Health Service Act to promote organ donation, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 624

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Organ Donation Improvement Act of 2001".

#### SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) PUBLIC AWARENESS OF NEED FOR ORGAN DONATION.—It is the sense of the Congress

that the Federal Government should carry out programs to educate the public with respect to organ donation, including the need to provide for an adequate rate of such donations.

(b) FAMILY DISCUSSIONS OF ORGAN DONATIONS.—The Congress recognizes the importance of families pledging to each other to share their lives as organ and tissue donors and acknowledges the importance of discussing organ and tissue donation as a family.

(c) LIVING DONATIONS OF ORGANS.—The Congress—

(1) recognizes the generous contribution made by each living individual who has donated an organ to save a life; and

(2) acknowledges the advances in medical technology that have enabled organ transplantation with organs donated by living individuals to become a viable treatment option for an increasing number of patients.

#### SEC. 3. PAYMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES INCURRED TOWARD LIVING ORGAN DONATION.

Section 377 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274f) is amended to read as follows:

"PAYMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES INCURRED TOWARD LIVING ORGAN DONATION

"SEC. 377. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make awards of grants or contracts to States, transplant centers, qualified organ procurement organizations under section 371, or other public or private entities for the purpose of—

"(1) providing for the payment of travel and subsistence expenses incurred by individuals toward making living donations of their organs (in this section referred as 'donating individuals'); and

"(2) in addition, providing for the payment of such incidental nonmedical expenses that are so incurred as the Secretary determines by regulation to be appropriate.

"(b) ELIGIBILITY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Payments under subsection (a) may be made for the qualifying expenses of a donating individual only if—

"(A) the State in which the donating individual resides is a different State than the State in which the intended recipient of the organ resides; and

"(B) the annual income of the intended recipient of the organ does not exceed \$35,000 (as adjusted for fiscal year 2002 and subsequent fiscal years to offset the effects of inflation occurring after the beginning of fiscal year 2001).

"(2) CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Subject to paragraph (1), the Secretary may in carrying out subsection (a) provide as follows:

"(A) The Secretary may consider the term 'donating individuals' as including individuals who in good faith incur qualifying expenses toward the intended donation of an organ but with respect to whom, for such reasons as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, no donation of the organ occurs.

"(B) The Secretary may consider the term 'qualifying expenses' as including the expenses of having one or more family members of donating individuals accompany the donating individuals for purposes of subsection (a) (subject to making payment for only such types of expenses as are paid for donating individuals).

"(c) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the geographic area to which a donating individual travels for purposes of subsection (a), if such area is other than the covered vicinity for the intended recipient of the organ, the amount of qualifying expenses for which payments under such subsection are made may not exceed the amount of such expenses for

which payment would have been made if such area had been the covered vicinity for the intended recipient, taking into account the costs of travel and regional differences in the costs of living.

"(2) COVERED VICINITY.—For purposes of this section, the term 'covered vicinity', with respect to an intended recipient of an organ from a donating individual, means the vicinity of the nearest transplant center to the residence of the intended recipient that regularly performs transplants of that type of organ.

"(d) RELATIONSHIP TO PAYMENTS UNDER OTHER PROGRAMS.—An award may be made under subsection (a) only if the applicant involved agrees that the award will not be expended to pay the qualifying expenses of a donating individual to the extent that payment has been made, or can reasonably be expected to be made, with respect to such expenses—

"(1) under any State compensation program, under an insurance policy, or under any Federal or State health benefits program; or

"(2) by an entity that provides health services on a prepaid basis.

"(e) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

"(1) The term 'covered vicinity' has the meaning given such term in subsection (c)(2).

"(2) The term 'donating individuals' has the meaning indicated for such term in subsection (a)(1), subject to subsection (b)(2)(A).

"(3) The term 'qualifying expenses' means the expenses authorized for purposes of subsection (a), subject to subsection (b)(2)(B).

"(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the purpose of carrying out this section, there is authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2002 through 2006."

#### SEC. 4. PUBLIC AWARENESS; STUDIES AND DEMONSTRATIONS.

Part H of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 273 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 377 the following section:

#### "PUBLIC AWARENESS; STUDIES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

"SEC. 377A. (a) PUBLIC AWARENESS.—The Secretary shall (directly or through grants or contracts) carry out a program to educate the public with respect to organ donation, including the need to provide for an adequate rate of such donations.

"(b) STUDIES AND DEMONSTRATIONS.—The Secretary may make grants to public and nonprofit private entities for the purpose of carrying out studies and demonstration projects with respect to providing for an adequate rate of organ donation.

"(c) GRANTS TO STATES.—The Secretary may make grants to States for the purpose of assisting States in carrying out organ donor awareness, public education and outreach activities and programs designed to increase the number of organ donors within the State, including living donors. To be eligible, each State shall—

"(1) submit an application to the Department in the form prescribed;

"(2) establish yearly benchmarks for improvement in organ donation rates in the State;

"(3) develop, enhance or expand a State donor registry, which shall be available to hospitals, organ procurement organizations, and other States upon a search request; and

"(4) report to the Secretary on an annual basis a description and assessment of the State's use of these grant funds, accompanied by an assessment of initiatives for potential replication in other States.

Funds may be used by the State or in partnership with other public agencies or private