ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 284) and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 284

Resolved, That the following Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

Committee on Agriculture: Mr. Neugebaurer.

Committee on Resources: Mr. Neugebaurer.

Committee on Science: Mr. Neugebaurer.

Committee on Small Business: Mr. McCotter.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid upon the table.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS LOU GEHRIG AND HIS LEGACY HAVE MADE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ALS

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Commerce be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 278) recognizing the contributions Lou Gehrig and his legacy have made in the fight against Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I do not intend to object, but I would like to speak from the well so I can stand here with a picture of Lou Gehrig of the New York Yankees.

Today is the 100th birthday of Lou Gehrig, and I am proud to rise today in favor of my resolution H. Res. 78 which celebrates Lou Gehrig's 100th birthday.

Lou Gehrig was born on June 19, 1903, 100 years ago today. He lived a storied life which ended tragically at the hands of a disease that still carries his name, Lou Gehrig's Disease, known as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or ALS. It is a devastating condition and a testament to Lou Gehrig's courage in the face of this horrible affliction.

In my own family, my grandmother, my father's mother, also died of the same disease and literally thousands upon thousands of Americans are suffering with this ALS disease.

Today there are celebrations in New York in honor of Lou Gehrig, most notably at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, where I am from, this afternoon. The ALS Association is remembering Lou Gehrig; today is Lou Gehrig Day at Yankee Stadium, the Iron Horse, that was his nickname, and is raising greater awareness about the disease. The ALS Association is committed to greater awareness about those suffering with ALS and the sacrifices of their loved ones who require the intense care these patients require.

Approximately 30,000 individuals in the United States are afflicted with ALS with about 5,000 new cases appearing each year. ALS destroys the lives of its victims and their families, leaving patients unable to walk, eat or even talk.

□ 1745

The life expectancy of an individual with ALS is only 3 to 5 years from the time of diagnosis. I have had many sufferers of ALS come into my office very courageously to talk about this affliction.

There is no known cure or cause for ALS. Research has given birth to new aggressive treatments for the symptoms of ALS that can extend the lives of patients. Recent advances in ALS research have produced promising leads into neurodegenerative diseases, and it is imperative that this important work continues. Furthermore, the sequencing of the Human Genome holds great promise in the search for cures for many diseases, including ALS.

My resolution honors Lou Gehrig and the contributions his legacy has made in the fight against this terrible disease. It also recognizes the efforts of the ALS Association in raising awareness, pursuing research, and providing support for ALS patients and their families. ALS patients exhibit incredible courage in their fight against this disease, and this resolution commends them for that and affirms the support of Congress for continued research into better treatments and a cure for ALS.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps there was no greater act of courage than when Lou Gehrig gave his farewell speech before the Yankee faithful at Yankee Stadium who were not ready to let him go. I want to read that famous speech into the RECORD. We all know it, where he said he considered himself the luckiest man on the face of the earth. He said: ''Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the bad break I got. Yet today, I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth. I have been in ballparks for 17 years and have never received anything but kindness and encouragement from you fans.

''Look at these grand men. Which of you wouldn't consider it the highlight of his career just to associate with them for even one day? Sure I'm lucky. Who wouldn't consider it an honor to have known Jacob Ruppert? Also, the builder of baseball's greatest empire, Ed Barrow? To have spent six years with that wonderful little fellow, Miller Huggins? Then to have spent the next nine years with that outstanding leader, that smart student of psychology, the best manager in baseball today, Joe McCarthy.

''Sure I'm lucky. When the New York Giants, a team you would give your right arm to beat, and vice versa, sends you gifts, that's something. When everybody down to the groundkeepers and those boys in white coats remember you with trophies, that's something. When you have a wonderful mother-in-law who takes sides with you in squabbles with her own daughter, that's something. When you have a father and a mother who work all their lives so you can have an education and build your body, it's a blessing. When you have a wife who has been a tower of strength and shown more courage than you dreamed existed, that's the finest I know. So I close in saying that I may have had a tough break, but I have an awful lot to live for.''

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will close by saying that we must do all we can to find a cure for a disease that still ravages the lives of its victims. I am proud that our colleagues in the House of Representatives are honoring a true hero in Lou Gehrig and affirming its commitment to overcoming the scourge of ALS for Lou Gehrig and every person who has fought this terrible disease.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ENGEL. Further reserving the right to object, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from the Bronx, and a Yankee fan, for yielding to me.

''Today, I am the luckiest man on the face of the earth.'' That one Yankee phrase immortalizes and is synonymous with courage, and that is why I am proud to stand with my friend from the Bronx and rise in support of his resolution, House Resolution 278. It is brought to the floor on June 19, 2003, the 100th birthday of Lou Gehrig, baseball's original ''Iron Horse,'' and perhaps the greatest, or one of the greatest to ever play the game. As my friend from New York knows, I am a bit of a baseball fan myself, having named two of my children Noland and Ryan.

Now, more importantly, this resolution recognizes the contribution that Gehrig and his legacy have made in the fight against ALS, the disease that claimed Lou Gehrig's life at age 37, and the disease that is named after him.

So what is Lou Gehrig's disease? Quite simply, ALS is the slow but steady deterioration of nerve cells in the brain and in the spinal cord. When these motor neurons can no longer send impulses to the muscles, the muscles begin to waste away causing increased muscle weakness. As the disease reaches its advanced stages, its victims struggle to even breathe and swallow. There is no cure for ALS.

Every day, an average of 15 people are newly diagnosed with ALS. Approximately one out of 800 male deaths and 1 out of 1,200 female deaths in the United States are due to ALS. More