

have the poorest survival rates of any racial or ethnic group diagnosed with AIDS, with 55 percent surviving after 9 years compared to 61 percent of Hispanics, 64 percent of whites, and 69 percent of Asian Pacific Islanders.

Another goal of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is to encourage State and local governments, including their public health agencies, to recognize this day and to publicize its importance among their communities as well as to encourage individuals to undergo testing for HIV.

At this time, I am particularly pleased to recognize the city of Alexandria and Wholistic Family Agape Ministries Institute for hosting a city of Alexandria Unified Outreach Event in recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, African-American females account for 76.5 percent of the female cases and African-American males account for 55.1 percent of the cases. On February 7, Mayor Bill Euille, on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, issued a proclamation urging all citizens to take part in activities and observances designed to increase awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS as a global challenge, to take part in HIV/AIDS prevention activities and programs, and to join the local and global effort to prevent the further spread of HIV and AIDS.

The Wholistic Family Agape Ministries Institute and the city of Alexandria should be commended for their efforts to provide information and support to the Alexandria community and help to lower the percentage of African-American individuals contracting HIV and AIDS.

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives will vote on House Concurrent Resolution 30 supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, which has been observed in February the past 5 years.

Last year, I brought together a number of African-American community leaders in Lansing, MI, with an expert on HIV/AIDS issues in the Black community. That gathering brought to light the sad statistics on this disease among African Americans across the Nation and right in my own community.

The more than 172,000 African Americans living with AIDS in the United States represents about 42 percent of cases in the Nation.

Estimates put the Michigan HIV-infected population at more than 16,000, with African-American men, at 44 percent, and African-American women, at 20 percent, outnumbering two-to-one all cases in white men—25 percent—and women—5 percent—and those of other ethnicity. Ingham County in the Eighth Congressional District is among the 15 Michigan counties that account for 84 percent of all cases of HIV/AIDS in the State.

Across the Nation, in 2003, African Americans accounted for half of all new HIV infections, even though they make up only slightly over 12 percent of the Nation's entire population. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control tell us that African-American women account for 67 percent of all new AIDS cases among women, and AIDS is one of the top three leading causes of death among African-American women ages 35 through 44.

Among African-American men, AIDS also falls in the top three of causes of death among those ages 25 through 54.

Today's vote highlights the need to support the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/

AIDS Awareness Day on February 7 each year at the local, State, and national level of government and media. It also highlights the need to build awareness and education among African-American communities as we work to reduce this dangerous disease among the families and communities across the Nation.

As we acknowledge the awareness and education efforts signified by National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, I am committed to working with our community and national groups as they focus on preventing this serious disease and reducing the impact it has on individual communities and states, and on our entire Nation.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 30, supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. HIV/AIDS is having a devastating affect on the African American community. The statistics given by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are staggering. The cold numbers reveal the stunning human cost of the disease.

While African Americans make up less than 13 percent of the population in the United States, they represent almost 40 percent of the diagnosed cases of AIDS since the epidemic started. In 2003, African Americans accounted for almost 50 percent of the estimated cases diagnosed. African American women are currently the most at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. The rate of AIDS cases among black women is 19 times higher than white women and five times the infection rate of Latinas. The infection rate among black men, while lower, is no less troubling. In 2003, 44 percent of the AIDS cases diagnosed among men were African American males.

These numbers are painful to listen to and to read. The painful realities of this world do not always make front-page news, but this issue must be addressed. We must join together in a bi-partisan, bi-cameral effort to eradicate this epidemic.

I am pleased to join with my esteemed colleague Ms. LEE in this effort and commend her distinguished and dedicated leadership on this issue. Mr. Speaker, thousands of African Americans are suffering from HIV/AIDS. On this day, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day, we must make a concerted effort to ensure that education, awareness and prevention are a priority in the 109th Congress.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) for his handling of the resolution on the floor today. I urge adoption of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 30, as amended.

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. TOWNS. 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.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, February 9, 2005.

Hon. DENNIS J. HASTERT,

House of Representatives,

Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER HASTERT: I hereby resign from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to accept my appointment to the Committee on Homeland Security.

Also, I ask that you consider my request for a leave of absence from the VA Committee. I have been privileged to serve as Chairman of the Health Subcommittee and hope to return to the Committee sometime in the future.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to serve our nation as a member of the new, permanent Homeland Security Committee. I appreciate all of your support.

All the best,

ROB SIMMONS,

Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 418, REAL ID ACT OF 2005

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 71 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 71

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 418) to establish and rapidly implement regulations for State driver's license and identification document security standards, to prevent terrorists from abusing the asylum laws of the United States, to unify terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and removal, and to ensure expeditious construction of the San Diego border fence. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour and 40 minutes, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform; and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Homeland Security. After general debate the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion. No further consideration of the bill shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

POINT OF ORDER

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order.