

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT THERE IS A CRITICAL NEED TO INCREASE RESEARCH, AWARENESS, AND EDUCATION ABOUT CEREBRAL CAVERNOUS MALFORMATIONS

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, medical science has made great strides in unlocking the mystery of illnesses that have plagued humanity for centuries. Medical breakthroughs have helped control and eliminate diseases that once threatened the life and health of millions. Yet for all our progress, we still face threats that we do not understand and therefore cannot stop.

One of the lesser known—but no less devastating—diseases is Cerebral Cavernous Malformation, also known as CCM, or Cavernous Angiomas. CCM's are caused by abnormal blood vessels that form clusters, known as angiomas, in the brain or spinal cord. If the angiomas bleed or press up against structures in the central nervous system, they can cause seizures, neurological deficits, hemorrhages, or headaches.

In the general population, 1 in approximately 200 people has a cavernous angioma and about one-third of these affected individuals become symptomatic at some point in their lives. In some Hispanic families, however, the rate of prevalence is significantly higher. It is what is known as an autosomal dominant disease, which means that each child of an affected parent has a 50 percent chance of inheriting it.

And Madam Speaker, tragically, for generations of these Hispanic families, that is exactly what has happened throughout the country, and especially in New Mexico. In New Mexico, this genetic mutation has been traced back to the original Spanish settlers of the 1580's and has now spread down and across at least 17 generations, resulting in what could be tens of thousands of cases of the illness in the state. In fact, New Mexico has the highest population density of this illness in the world.

Unfortunately, and in some cases tragically, many of the carriers of the gene and even the disease are unaware. To make matters worse, New Mexico, and the nation, face a shortage of physicians who are familiar with this illness. This makes it dangerously difficult to receive timely diagnosis and appropriate care and puts potentially thousands of individuals at risk of a stroke, seizures, or even sudden death.

One New Mexico resident, Joyce Gonzales, was diagnosed with an angioma in her cervical spinal cord and had it surgically removed three years ago. But this success story followed 15 years of pain and misdiagnosis. Tragically, Mrs. Gonzales's 9-year-old second cousin was not as fortunate, recently suffering a cerebral hemorrhagic death caused by CCM.

Madam Speaker, much of the misdiagnosis of CCM, the inexact figures, and lack of knowledge in the medical community is attributable to a lack of research of the disease. NIH funds only eight projects on CCM. This, despite recent indications that staff at the Na-

tional Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke believes CCM to be a "paradigm illness," meaning research findings on CCM could apply to other illnesses that have similar characteristics.

It is clear, Madam Speaker, that more education, awareness, and research is necessary on this disease. That is why I am introducing this resolution today to express the sense of the House of Representatives that there is a critical need to do exactly that; expand education, awareness and research of CCM. This is only a preliminary step in the fight against this disease. I believe a Center of Excellence is needed to provide the highest quality medical and surgical care for families with CCM. An expansion of the existing DNA/Tissue and Clinical Database is also needed. The current database is underfunded, which means that they cannot accept all the samples that are offered. I will be working to establish both of those.

In the meantime, Joyce Gonzales, Dr. Leslie Morrison of the University of New Mexico, and Connie Lee, the President of the Angioma Alliance, are on the forefront of the fight against CCM. It is my honor to join them in this fight by introducing this resolution today and I urge my colleagues to help raise awareness of this devastating disease. There is too much at stake to ignore it.

TRIBUTE TO CELEBRATE THE 60TH BIRTHDAY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

**HON. BILL SALI**

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. SALI. Madam Speaker, the 60th birthday of the State of Israel is a time of joyous celebration for all who honor hope, dignity and liberty.

Since even before the First World War, Jewish people from all over the globe have traveled back to their historic homeland. The hope of a secure Jewish homeland was a dream worked for by so many for so long. From dispersion and oppression to bitter pogroms and on through the murderous horror of the Holocaust, the Jewish people have endured more than can be put into words.

Still, through it all, they have persisted and persevered, maintaining their identity, traditions and faith.

On that great day some 60 years ago, the State of Israel declared its independence. Only eleven minutes after Israel did so, President Harry Truman declared America's recognition of the new Jewish State. Since this time, all the leaders of the United States have expressed their support for the State of Israel, and the people of both countries have continually nurtured, promoted and developed their shared values and interests.

President Bush recently made a public statement which summarizes my own views on Israel: "The United States will never abandon its commitment to the security of Israel as a Jewish state and homeland for the Jewish people."

I am an uncompromising advocate for Israel's security and freedom. Anything which infringes upon the rights and welfare of the State of Israel is not in America's interests and

must never be tolerated. I have served and will continue to serve proudly on the Congressional Israel Allies Caucus. I have co-sponsored legislation to protect this great nation through condemning ongoing Palestinian rocket attacks on innocent Israel civilians, anti-Semitic rhetoric and the glorification of terrorism.

Support for Israel must remain central to American foreign policy. This support is especially essential given the threats Israel continues to face. The brutal terrorist organization Hamas is an ongoing threat to Israel's well-being. Iran continues to shake its potential nuclear sword against Israel, and Al-Qaeda fights for a foothold in Pakistan in order to spread its viral cruelty all the way to Jerusalem. Syria proudly maintains its hostility to the Jewish State, seeming only to be waiting for an opportune moment to pounce.

We must always help Israel keep a well-armed guard up. To do less would be to breach our national interest and our national honor.

For 60 years, the Israelis have strained and endured in their desert home, overcoming in several major wars, endless attacks and terrorism. Amazingly, out of all of this turmoil, pain, and violence, a home has bloomed out of the Middle Eastern sands for these wonderful individuals who only seek a home for themselves and their families.

Sixty years is an anniversary well worth celebrating. While the pain of the past cannot be eradicated, nor can the courage, fortitude and hope of a people who have endured and triumphed, again and again.

May we all join in the prayer of the 122nd Psalm:

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
They that love thee shall prosper.

Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will say now, peace be within thee.

For the sake of the House of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.

I trust that all my colleagues will join me in saying "amen" to this prayer.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACT

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I have tried to come up with legislation that would give us more than 24 hours in a day—but I have not figured out how to do that. So for the time being, I am introducing the Family-Friendly Workplace Act that aims to give working people the opportunity to spend more time with their families.

Time is one of our most precious resources. We all want more of it and yet we only have 24 hours in a day. That means we have to figure out how to work a full day, run errands, pack lunches, make dinner and spend quality time with our kids, spouse, or elderly parent.

One of the biggest struggles parents face is how to balance work and family. Being a new mom, I struggle with it every day. This bill will give people more flexibility so you can put in the time you need to get the job done, but also make sure you can make the school play, stay home with a sick child or care for an elderly parent.