

House Concurrent Resolution No. 53

95TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES WALTON GRAY (Sponsor), PACE, CHAPPELLE-NADAL, CARTER, NASHEED, JONES (63), MORRIS, BROWN (50), HUGHES, RUCKER, CURLS, LeBLANC, WEBB AND HOSKINS (80) (Co-sponsors).

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1 **Whereas**, Dr. Charles Richard Drew was an African American physician and
2 medical researcher in the field of blood transfusions, and developed improved techniques for
3 blood storage; and
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5 **Whereas**, Dr. Charles Drew developed a technique for the long-term preservation
6 of blood plasma. Prior to his discovery, blood could not be stored for more than two days
7 because of the rapid breakdown of red blood cells; and
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9 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew discovered that by separating plasma from the whole blood
10 and then refrigerating them separately, they could be combined up to a week later for a blood
11 transfusion; and
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13 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew also discovered that while everyone has a certain type of blood
14 - A, B, AB, or O - and thus prevented from receiving a full blood transfusion from someone with
15 different blood, everyone has the same type of plasma. Thus, in certain cases where a whole
16 blood transfusion is not necessary, it was sufficient to give a plasma transfusion which could be
17 administered to anyone, regardless of their blood type; and
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19 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew applied his expert knowledge in developing large-scale blood
20 banks early in World War II, saving thousands of lives of the Allied Forces, and convincing
21 Columbia University to establish a blood bank; and
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23 **Whereas**, in late 1940, Dr. Drew set up and administered an early prototype
24 program for collecting, testing, and distributing blood plasma in Britain. The Blood for Britain
25 program in the United States was a project to aid British soldiers and civilians by giving blood
26 to Britain. The program operated successfully for five months, with total collections of almost
27 15,000 people donating blood and over 5,500 vials of blood plasma; and
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29 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew was named project director for the American Red Cross, but
30 soon resigned his post after the United States War Department issued a directive that blood taken
31 from White donors should be segregated from that of Black donors; and
32

33 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew was the first African American to receive a Doctor of Medical
34 Science degree from Columbia University, and in 1942 became the head of Howard University's
35 Department of Surgery. Dr. Drew was initially the Chief of Surgery at Freedmen's Hospital, and
36 later was named Chief of Staff and Medical Director for the Hospital; and
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38 **Whereas**, in 1948, Dr. Drew was awarded the Spingarn Medal from the NAACP
39 for his work on blood plasma and became the first African American to be appointed an
40 examiner by the American Board of Surgery; and
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42 **Whereas**, Dr. Drew was killed in an automobile accident in April 1950 on the way
43 to a medical conference; and
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45 **Whereas**, blood transfusions are sometimes the best way to treat and prevent some
46 of the complications of sickle cell anemia. Two million African Americans, or 1 in 12, have the
47 sickle cell trait and more than 80,000 people in the United States, 98% of whom are African
48 American, are affected by sickle cell disease; and
49

50 **Whereas**, Dr. Charles Drew has been considered one of the most honored and
51 respected figures in the medical field and his development of the blood plasma bank has given
52 a second chance of life to millions:

53 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
54 Representatives of the Ninety-fifth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the Senate
55 concurring therein, hereby designates December 4, 2010, as "Dr. Charles Drew Recognition Day"
56 in Missouri; and

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58 **Be it further resolved** that the General Assembly encourages and urges all
59 citizens of the State of Missouri to participate in appropriate activities on Dr. Charles Drew
60 Recognition Day to honor the medical revolution Dr. Drew made within the medical profession
61 by storing blood plasma, establishing the American Red Cross blood bank, and organizing the
62 world's first blood bank drive.

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