

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 29
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR COTTEN

Introduced: 1/24/92
Referred: Health, Education and Social Services

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating April 19 - 25, 1992, as "Bone Marrow Donor Week."

2 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 WHEREAS many Alaskans and thousands of people throughout the world suffer from leukemia
4 and other blood-related diseases and cannot survive without a bone marrow transplant; and

5 WHEREAS recent advances in bone marrow transplants now give people dying of blood-related
6 diseases hope to be cured if a donor can be found whose bone marrow matches their own; and

7 WHEREAS 70 percent of the individuals needing a bone marrow transplant lack a qualified
8 donor within their own families and must find an unrelated donor whose bone marrow perfectly matches
9 their own to provide the life-saving marrow; and

10 WHEREAS the chances of finding a suitable unrelated bone marrow donor is between one in
11 20,000 and one in 1,000,000, depending on the patient's genetic make-up; and

12 WHEREAS there is a national bone marrow donor registry, established in 1987, to assist people
13 in finding a suitable donor from a pool of 470,000 "typed" volunteers ready and willing to donate their
14 life-giving marrow; and

15 WHEREAS there is an urgent, nationwide need to increase the pool to 1,000,000 available
16 marrow donors of all ethnic backgrounds to increase the chance of finding a suitable donor for the

1 10,000 people who are currently awaiting a bone marrow transplant throughout the United States and
2 who will die without a bone marrow transplant; and

3 **WHEREAS** thousands of people have already died for lack of a suitable marrow donor and this
4 same grim prospect faces many other patients and their families throughout Alaska; and

5 **WHEREAS** Alaska currently has over 4,100 potential donors in the National Registry; and

6 **WHEREAS** in 1991, despite the staggering odds, Alaskan donors provided six bone marrow
7 matches, and three were provided for Alaskans requiring the marrow transplant through reciprocal
8 nationwide efforts through the National Bone Marrow Donor Program; and

9 **WHEREAS** the Blood Bank of Alaska has conducted successful bone marrow drives in
10 Anchorage, Juneau, Eagle River, Wasilla, Palmer, Fairbanks, McGrath, Kenai, Soldotna, and Hoonah
11 with drives scheduled for Kodiak and Dutch Harbor; and

12 **WHEREAS**, coupled with the aid of a special appropriation for type testing, numerous service
13 organizations throughout the state, spearheaded by the Eagle River Lions and Lionesses, have provided
14 countless hours in raising necessary funds and volunteering thousands of hours to conduct the drives
15 throughout Alaska and the ongoing efforts in Anchorage and Eagle River; and

16 **WHEREAS** in 1991 over 3,500 additional Alaskans were enrolled in the National Bone Marrow
17 Registry as a result of these efforts; and

18 **WHEREAS** a special outreach also helped enroll 126 Alaska Natives who were seriously
19 underrepresented in the National Registry and, as a result, were unlikely to find a successful match; and

20 **WHEREAS** it is necessary to continue to promote a greater awareness of the need for healthy
21 bone marrow donors and to encourage more Alaskans to step forward to be typed and enrolled in the
22 National Bone Marrow Donor Registry so that the pool is as large and diverse as possible; and

23 **WHEREAS** with these initial efforts a minimum of one percent of Alaska's total population will
24 be enrolled in the Bone Marrow Donor Program;

25 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature designates the week of April 19 - 25, 1992,
26 as "Bone Marrow Donor Week"; and be it

27 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the legislature encourages the commissioners of the state
28 departments, with the commissioner of health and social services taking the lead, to work in cooperation
29 with the Blood Bank of Alaska, Inc., to educate and inform state employees and other Alaskans about
30 the bone marrow donor program through newsletters, check stubs, and other appropriate forms of
31 communication.