

## Senate Resolution 155

By: Senators Anderson of the 43rd, Davenport of the 44th, Rahman of the 5th, Seay of the 34th, Merritt of the 9th and others

## A RESOLUTION

- 1 Recognizing March 4, 2021, as Be The Match Day; and for other purposes.
- 2 WHEREAS, every three minutes, someone is diagnosed with a blood cancer or other blood  
3 disorder, which can happen to anyone at any time; and
- 4 WHEREAS, in 1987, the United States Congress authorized the establishment of a national  
5 registry of volunteer bone marrow donors, operated since its inception by the National  
6 Marrow Donor Program, now known as Be The Match, which has facilitated more than  
7 100,000 marrow, blood stem cell, and umbilical cord blood transplants; and
- 8 WHEREAS, seventy percent of all patients who need a bone marrow, peripheral blood stem  
9 cell, or cord blood transplant do not have a matching donor in their family and depend on the  
10 Be The Match registry to find an unrelated donor or cord blood unit; and
- 11 WHEREAS, in order to ensure that all patients have an equal chance of finding a match  
12 regardless of racial or ethnic background, Be The Match has a specific need to increase  
13 awareness among African Americans, Latinos, Asian and Pacific Islanders, Native  
14 Americans, and other under-represented groups; and

15 WHEREAS, given the current composition of the Be The Match registry, the likelihood of  
16 finding a match for a patient in need of a transplant ranges from 23 to 77 percent, depending  
17 on the patient's racial or ethnic background; and

18 WHEREAS, Georgia has a vested interest in and an ability to positively impact cures for  
19 blood cancer and blood diseases; and

20 WHEREAS, in 2020, there were a total of 439 searching patients in need of a donor and 118  
21 transplant recipients in Georgia; and

22 WHEREAS, currently, Georgia has over 170,000 searchable donors on the registry; and

23 WHEREAS, there is a need to enhance the understanding of how bone marrow and blood  
24 stem cell donations deliver cures and to encourage residents of Georgia to join the Be The  
25 Match registry; and

26 WHEREAS, the donor registration process only takes a few minutes and requires a simple  
27 cheek swab; and

28 WHEREAS, there is a need to engage the public to increase diversity in the registry with the  
29 goal of finding a matching donor for all patients to receive the transplant they need when  
30 they need it; and

31 WHEREAS, Be The Match operates the most diverse registry of potential bone marrow  
32 donors, including more than 22 million potential donors and 300,000 cord blood units, but  
33 it is still not diverse enough to meet the needs of all patients; and

34 WHEREAS, regardless of background, socioeconomic status, age, ancestry, or location, Be  
35 The Match is committed to creating equal outcomes for all.

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
37 recognize March 4, 2021, as Be The Match Day and encourage eligible citizens to join the  
38 Be The Match registry.

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
40 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the public and the  
41 press.