



Statement in Support of H.R. 2820 “Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015”

September 8, 2015—The National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP)/Be The Match Chief Executive Officer Dr. Jeffrey Chell expresses support and gratitude to Reps. Chris Smith (R-NJ), Doris Matsui (D-CA), David Jolly (R-FL), and Chaka Fattah (D-PA) for introducing H.R. 2820, the “Stem Cell Therapeutic Research and Reauthorization Act of 2015,” which the House of Representatives passed today on the Suspension Calendar.

“Because of the work of Reps. Smith, Matsui, Jolly, and Fattah, those patients in need of a life-saving adult stem cell transplant will have access to one through the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program and NMDP/Be The Match,” said Dr. Chell. “We applaud their efforts to make sure that the authorization for this essential public health program does not expire.”

This legislation reauthorizes the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program, which the NMDP/Be The Match operates through a competitively bid contract with the Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA). The legislation continues support for all aspects of the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program:

- The **Single Point of Access** is the national adult donor and cord blood registry. Today, the registry includes 12.5 million donors and 209,000 cord blood units. Through international relationships, the NMDP/Be The Match has access to 24.5 million additional potential donors and 622,000 cord blood units worldwide.
- The **Office of Patient Advocacy** provides help, support, and understanding to patients and families facing the crisis of a life-threatening illness, from diagnosis through survivorship.
- The **Bone Marrow Coordinating Center** matches donors with patients and recruits potential marrow donors, helps donors throughout the donation process, and works with its network of organizations throughout the transplant process.
- The **Cord Blood Coordinating Center** partners with cord blood banks to recruit expectant parents for umbilical cord donation and seeks to increase access to transplant by matching and facilitating distribution of donated cord blood units searched through the registry.
- The **Stem Cell Therapeutic Outcomes Database** collects and uses data about bone marrow and cord blood transplantation for research to define

and refine all aspects of transplantation to help more patients live longer, healthier lives.

The legislation also reauthorizes the National Cord Blood Inventory (NCBI) grant program, first established in 2005. Through the NCBI, HRSA provides funding to public cord blood banks for the collection and storage of cord blood units that are then listed on the national registry.

The C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program continues to focus on patients for whom cellular therapy is the best hope for a cure. The NMDP/Be The Match has facilitated more than 61,000 transplants since 1987 and increased the diversity of the registry. The number of transplants for minority patients has increased four-fold. The one-year survival rate for all patients has increased from just over 40 percent to 70 percent between 1988 and 2005.

Passage of H.R. 2820 continues the commitment that the Congress made beginning in the mid-1980s to help patients with blood cancers, like leukemia and lymphoma, and other life-threatening diseases, such as sickle cell disease have access to a life-saving transplant. Every five years since that time the Congress has reauthorized the program on a bipartisan, bicameral basis. With passage of H.R. 2820 in today, the House of Representatives maintains that long-standing support.