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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 595
By Jones, S.

A RESOLUTION urging the United States Congress to fully fund the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act for HIV victims.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress enacted the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act of 1998; and

WHEREAS, the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act was enacted to provide for compassionate payments to individuals with blood-clotting disorders, such as hemophilia, who contracted the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) due to contaminated blood products; and

WHEREAS, in its review of the events surrounding the HIV infection of thousands of people with blood-clotting disorders, such as hemophilia, a 1995 (Institute of Medicine) study, entitled "HIV and the Blood Supply," discovered a failure of leadership and an inadequate institutional decision-making process in the system responsible for ensuring blood safety; the report concluding that a failure of leadership led to less than effective donor screening, weak regulatory actions and insufficient communication to patients about the risk of AIDS; and

WHEREAS, this legislation, named after a teen-age hemophiliac who died from AIDS, was enacted to provide financial relief to the families of hemophiliacs who were devastated by the federal government's policy failure in its handling of the AIDS epidemic; and

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WHEREAS, since the relief bill has been signed into law by the President, Congress has been reticent to fund it; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That the Tennessee General Assembly hereby most strongly urges and encourages the United States Congress to fully fund the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund, enacted into law under the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act of 1998, in the year 2000 to ensure that there is no delay between the authorization and timely appropriation of this greatly needed relief for families of hemophiliacs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate, and to each member of Tennessee's congressional delegation.