

111<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. RES. 1302

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Hepatitis Awareness Month  
and World Hepatitis Day.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 27, 2010

Mr. CAO (for himself, Mr. HONDA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DENT, and Mr. CASSIDY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of National Hepatitis  
Awareness Month and World Hepatitis Day.

Whereas infection with the hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C virus and the incidence of liver disease and cancer caused by these viruses has become an urgent problem of global proportions;

Whereas it is estimated that 2,000,000,000 people worldwide have been infected with the hepatitis B virus and up to 400,000,000 people worldwide live with chronic infection;

Whereas an estimated 600,000 people worldwide die each year due to the consequences of hepatitis B infection;

Whereas it is estimated that 170,000,000 people worldwide are chronically infected with the hepatitis C virus, with an estimated 3,500,000 new infections every year;

Whereas an estimated 1,700,000 people worldwide die each year due to liver failure or primary liver cancer from chronic infection of the hepatitis C virus;

Whereas hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections are a growing health crisis in the United States, while an estimated 5,300,000 people in the United States are chronically infected with either the hepatitis B or hepatitis C virus;

Whereas an estimated 43,000 new infections of the hepatitis B virus and 17,000 new infections of the hepatitis C virus occur each year domestically;

Whereas approximately 65 percent and 75 percent of the infected population are unaware that they are infected with the hepatitis B or hepatitis C virus;

Whereas, because of the asymptomatic nature of the diseases, a person who has become chronically infected with the hepatitis B or C virus may not have symptoms for up to 40 years after the initial infection has occurred;

Whereas many people are unaware they are infected with chronic hepatitis B or hepatitis C until they develop symptoms of liver cancer or liver disease years later;

Whereas, as a result, approximately 15,000 people die each year from liver disease or liver cancer related to chronic viral hepatitis;

Whereas hepatitis C claims roughly 12,000 deaths each year in the United States, and the overall rate of hepatitis C-related deaths in the United States is expected to triple by 2019;

Whereas African-Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, gay and bisexual men, and persons who inject drugs have higher

rates of chronic viral hepatitis infections in the United States;

Whereas one-third of HIV-positive people in the United States are co-infected with the hepatitis C virus, and one-tenth of HIV-positive people in the United States are co-infected with the hepatitis B virus;

Whereas although life expectancies for HIV-positive persons have increased with therapy, liver disease, mostly related to hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections, has become the most common non-AIDS-related cause of death among this population;

Whereas chronic hepatitis B and C infections cost the United States \$16,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas despite the fact that chronic viral hepatitis is the most common blood borne infection in the United States, there is currently no routine and universal screening in place for early detection;

Whereas in 2010, the Institute of Medicine issued a report on their findings about chronic viral hepatitis, which attributed the lack of knowledge and awareness among the United States public and health providers, the large health disparities, and the current morbidity and mortality, to the lack of dedicated resources;

Whereas the first World Hepatitis Day on May 19, 2008, brought messages about the need for action, compassion, and understanding about chronic viral hepatitis around the world; and

Whereas the goals of World Hepatitis Day and National Hepatitis Awareness Month in May are to highlight the global nature of chronic viral hepatitis epidemics, to recognize the need for a comprehensive public education and aware-

ness campaign designed to help infected patients and their physicians identify and manage the secondary prevention of the disease, and to help increase the length and quality of life for those diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B and C infections: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) supports the goals and ideals of World Hep-  
3       atitis Day and National Hepatitis Awareness Month;  
4       and

5               (2) promotes raising awareness of the risks and  
6       consequences of undiagnosed chronic hepatitis B and  
7       hepatitis C infections, and the urgency for a robust  
8       governmental and public health response to protect  
9       the health of more than 5,000,000 people in the  
10       United States and nearly 600,000,000 people world-  
11       wide who suffer from chronic viral hepatitis.

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