

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 180

Expressing support for the designation of April 30, 2023, as “National Adult Hepatitis B Vaccination Awareness Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 27, 2023

Ms. HIRONO submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of April 30, 2023, as “National Adult Hepatitis B Vaccination Awareness Day”.

Whereas up to 2,400,000 individuals in the United States are chronically infected with hepatitis B, and up to $\frac{2}{3}$ of individuals with chronic hepatitis B are unaware of their infection;

Whereas hepatitis B is a viral infection of the liver transmitted via infected blood and other bodily fluids, including through mother-to-child transmission and injection drug use;

Whereas hepatitis B is associated with significant disparities among communities of color (including Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and African immigrants), sexual and gender minority communities, and those affected by the opioid crisis;

Whereas individuals with chronic diseases, such as diabetes, HIV, hepatitis C, and chronic liver disease, and individuals on hemodialysis are at an increased risk for hepatitis B co-infection;

Whereas there is no cure for hepatitis B, and individuals with chronic hepatitis B require lifelong medical care;

Whereas chronic hepatitis B represents 1 of the most common causes of liver cancer;

Whereas 1 in every 4 individuals with unmanaged chronic hepatitis B will develop liver cancer, cirrhosis, or liver failure, with liver cancer having a 5-year survival rate of only 18 percent in the United States;

Whereas safe and highly effective vaccines to protect against hepatitis B are available;

Whereas, in accordance with universal childhood hepatitis B vaccination recommendations in the United States, infants and children have been routinely vaccinated against hepatitis B since the 1990s;

Whereas all adults between 19 and 59 years of age, and adults 60 and older who have hepatitis B risk factors, are recommended to be vaccinated against hepatitis B;

Whereas the hepatitis B vaccine, which is 95 percent effective and was the first anticancer vaccine to be developed, is projected to have prevented 310,000,000 cases of hepatitis B worldwide from 1990 to 2020;

Whereas only 30 percent of adults in the United States are vaccinated against hepatitis B;

Whereas the number of reported acute hepatitis B cases increased by 11 percent nationwide from 2014 to 2018;

Whereas, as a result of the drug use epidemic, there have been significant regional increases in acute hepatitis B cases in the United States, including—

- (1) a reported 489 percent increase from 2015 to 2016 in Maine;
- (2) a reported 114 percent increase from 2009 to 2013 in Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee;
- (3) a reported 78 percent increase in 2017 in southeastern Massachusetts; and
- (4) a reported 56 percent increase from 2014 to 2016 in North Carolina;

Whereas 36 percent of new hepatitis B cases are among individuals who inject drugs;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hepatitis B is 50 to 100 times more infectious than HIV and 5 to 10 times more infectious than hepatitis C; and

Whereas there are significant opportunities, particularly with respect to the drug use epidemic, to prevent new hepatitis B infections and thereby reduce the incidence of liver cancer and cirrhosis through efforts to—

- (1) increase adult hepatitis B vaccination; and
- (2) maintain childhood hepatitis B vaccination: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the designation of April 30, 2023,
3 as “National Adult Hepatitis B Vaccination Awareness Day”;

4 (2) recognizes the importance of providing support and encouragement—

1 (A) for all adults to be tested for hepatitis
2 B at least once in their lifetime in accordance
3 with recommendations;

4 (B) for individuals susceptible to infection
5 to be vaccinated against hepatitis B; and

6 (C) for individuals diagnosed with hepatitis
7 B to be linked to appropriate care; and

8 (3) in order to reduce the number of new hepa-
9 titis B infections and hepatitis B-related deaths, en-
10 courages a commitment to—

11 (A) increasing adult hepatitis B vaccina-
12 tion rates;

13 (B) maintaining childhood hepatitis B vac-
14 cination rates; and

15 (C) promoting provider and community
16 awareness of adult hepatitis B vaccination.

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