

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 36

Unofficial  
Relating to Shingles Awareness and Prevention Month in Missouri

Whereas, herpes zoster (shingles) is a disease caused by the same virus (zoster) that causes chickenpox; therefore, any individual who has contracted chickenpox is at risk for shingles, corresponding to approximately ninety-eight percent of U.S. adults; and

Whereas, nearly one in three people in the United States will contract shingles in their lifetime, corresponding to an estimated one million people annually; and

Whereas, the risk of shingles increases with age, with nearly half of those affected being over sixty years old and half of people living until eighty-five years old developing shingles; and

Whereas, shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash that can be severe, along with other symptoms, including long-term nerve pain, fever, headache, chills, upset stomach, muscle weakness, skin infection, scarring, and a decrease or loss of vision or hearing; and

Whereas, as many as twenty percent of adults who have contracted shingles will develop postherpetic neuralgia, a debilitating complication of shingles that causes severe pain and that may interfere with sleep and recreational activities and be associated with clinical depression; and

Whereas, vaccines have reduced the burden of widespread and often fatal diseases, enabling individuals to lead longer and healthier lives while reducing health care costs; and

Whereas, much attention has been paid to the importance of childhood vaccinations, but there is a general lack of awareness of adult-recommended vaccines and a misperception that immunizations are unnecessary for healthy adults; and

Whereas, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommend that healthy adults fifty years and older be vaccinated against shingles to prevent shingles and shingles-related complications; and

Whereas, despite the recommendations of CDC officials and other experts that all healthy adults be vaccinated against shingles, as of 2015 only thirty percent of eligible adults had received the shingles vaccine; and

Whereas, the annual economic burden of shingles in American adults is estimated to be between

\$782 million and \$5 billion; and

Whereas, the Institute of Medicine has stated that one of the six causes of excess costs in the U.S. health care system is missed prevention opportunities; and

Whereas, millions of American adults go without routine and recommended vaccinations because medical systems are not designed to ensure that adults receive regular preventive health care; and

Whereas, as the month of August is observed as National Immunization Awareness Month, residents of Missouri should be encouraged to speak with their health care provider to ensure that they have been properly vaccinated against shingles according to current CDC and ACIP recommendations:

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-ninth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby designate August as "Shingles Awareness and Prevention Month" in Missouri to increase public awareness of the importance of adults receiving vaccines against shingles and to promote outreach and education efforts concerning adult vaccinations; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Department of Health and Senior Services shall take appropriate action to promote Shingles Awareness and Prevention Month, including urging health care practitioners to discuss vaccines for shingles with adult patients and adopting appropriate programs and initiatives to raise public awareness of the importance of adult vaccinations; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Department of Health and Senior Services shall create and disseminate educational resources on shingles and shingles vaccinations to educate the residents of Missouri on vaccine-preventable diseases, including shingles; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to send a properly inscribed copy of this resolution to the Governor for his approval or rejection pursuant to the Missouri Constitution.