

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 602

Expressing support for the designation of April 30, 2022, as “National Adult Hepatitis B Vaccination Awareness Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 28, 2022

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, 2022, 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 two-thirds of individuals with chronic hepatitis B are unaware of their infection status;

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

Whereas hepatitis B is associated with significant disparities among—

- (1) communities of color, including Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and African immigrants;
- (2) sexual and gender minority communities; and

(3) individuals 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 one 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 the ages of 19 and 59 and adults 60 and older with 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 between 1990 and 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 in the United States between 2014 and 2018;

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

(1) a 489 percent increase between 2015 and 2016 in Maine;

(2) a reported 114 percent increase between 2009 and 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 between 2014 and 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 within the setting of the opioid 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, 2022,

3 as “National Adult Hepatitis B Vaccination Aware-

4 ness Day”;

1 (2) recognizes the importance of providing sup-
2 port and encouragement—

3 (A) for all individuals to be tested for hep-
4 atitis B;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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