

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 64

Introduced by Assembly Member Ma

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Brownley, Eng, Evans, Fong, Lieu, Monning, Ruskin, Salas, Saldana, Torlakson, Torrico, and Yamada)

April 20, 2009

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 64—Relative to Hepatitis B Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 64, as introduced, Ma. Hepatitis B.

This measure would declare May 2009, to be Hepatitis B Awareness Month in California, declare the Legislature's support of the goals and ideals of World Hepatitis Awareness Day, and call on all interested parties to come together to raise awareness and educate the public on hepatitis B and to make recommendations on ways to implement best practices in hepatitis B prevention and treatment.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, May 19, 2009, is World Hepatitis Awareness Day;
- 2 and
- 3 WHEREAS, California does not currently have a comprehensive
- 4 statewide plan addressing the prevention and treatment of chronic
- 5 hepatitis B for all Californians; and
- 6 WHEREAS, Chronic hepatitis B is a condition that affects the
- 7 human liver, and when left untreated, can lead to further
- 8 complications, including cirrhosis, liver cancer, and ultimately,
- 9 liver failure and death; and

1 WHEREAS, Chronic hepatitis B infection is among the top three
 2 causes of cancer in the world and causes the death of one person
 3 every 30 seconds; and

4 WHEREAS, In the United States, it is estimated that up to 2
 5 million people are chronically infected with hepatitis B; and

6 WHEREAS, More than 400,000 Californians are chronically
 7 infected with hepatitis B; and

8 WHEREAS, Chronic hepatitis B disproportionately affects
 9 certain communities of color. For example, chronic hepatitis B
 10 and liver cancer are the greatest health disparity for Asians and
 11 Pacific Islanders; and

12 WHEREAS, Asians and Pacific Islanders comprise 13 percent
 13 of the population of Los Angeles County and suffer from a rate of
 14 liver cancer more than triple than that of non-Hispanic whites; and

15 WHEREAS, San Francisco has the highest proportion of Asian
 16 and Pacific Islander populations in the continental United States
 17 and correspondingly, has the highest rate of liver cancer in the
 18 nation; and,

19 WHEREAS, Chronic hepatitis B is preventable and in many
 20 cases can be cured or managed using currently available treatments;
 21 and

22 WHEREAS, But for many reasons, those at risk for hepatitis B
 23 infection are not receiving prevention information, while those
 24 chronically infected are not receiving treatment; and

25 WHEREAS, Given that chronic hepatitis B is a lifelong
 26 condition, some who are at risk refuse to be tested out of fear that
 27 a positive diagnosis will be considered as a permanent, preexisting
 28 condition for health care insurance underwriting purposes and will
 29 thereby put their future health care coverage at risk, especially if
 30 laid off and rehired by a second employer; now, therefore, be it

31 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
 32 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature declares May 2009, to be
 33 Hepatitis B Awareness Month in California and supports the goals
 34 and ideals of World Hepatitis Awareness Day; and be it further

35 Resolved, That the Legislature calls on all interested parties,
 36 including, but not limited to, the public and private sector, for-profit
 37 sector, the private nonprofit sector, and the philanthropic
 38 community to come together to raise awareness and educate the
 39 public on hepatitis B and to make recommendations on ways to

- 1 implement best practices in hepatitis B prevention and treatment;
- 2 and be it further,
- 3 Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 4 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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