
Introduced by Senator Ashburn

March 17, 2009

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24—Relative to Valley Fever Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 24, as introduced, Ashburn. Valley Fever Awareness Month. This measure would proclaim August 2009 as Valley Fever Awareness Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Valley fever (coccidioidomycosis), a progressive,
- 2 multisymptom, respiratory disorder, is a debilitating disease; and
- 3 WHEREAS, It is caused by the inhalation of tiny airborne fungi
- 4 that live in soil, but are released into the air by soil disturbance or
- 5 wind; and
- 6 WHEREAS, Valley fever attacks the respiratory system, causing
- 7 infection that can lead to symptoms that resemble a cold, influenza,
- 8 or pneumonia redundant; and
- 9 WHEREAS, Left untreated or mistreated, infection can spread
- 10 from the lungs into the bloodstream, causing inflammation to the
- 11 skin, permanent damage to lung and bone tissue, and swelling of
- 12 the membrane surrounding the brain, leading to meningitis, which
- 13 can be devastating and even fatal; and
- 14 WHEREAS, Once serious symptoms of valley fever appear,
- 15 including pneumonia and labored breathing, treatment must be
- 16 prompt with antifungal drugs that are disagreeable and often toxic,
- 17 especially for patients who have them injected beneath the base

1 of their skulls for meningitis, causing side effects such as nausea,
2 fever, and kidney damage; and

3 WHEREAS, Within California alone, valley fever is found in
4 portions of the Sacramento Valley, all of the San Joaquin Valley,
5 desert regions, and portions of southern California; and

6 WHEREAS, In the last 10 years, infection rates in California
7 and Arizona have risen 400 percent, from an estimated 1,600 cases
8 in 1996 to over 8,000 cases in 2006; and

9 WHEREAS, Central valley prison inmates are being infected
10 by valley fever at epidemic levels, contributing significantly to the
11 state's prison health care costs; and

12 WHEREAS, Valley fever kills between 100 and 200 more
13 Americans every year than tuberculosis; and

14 WHEREAS, Valley fever most seriously affects the young, the
15 elderly, those with lowered immune systems, and those of African
16 American and Filipino descent; and

17 WHEREAS, Valley fever has been a disease studied for the past
18 100 years, but still remains impossible to control and difficult to
19 treat; and

20 WHEREAS, There is no known cure to date for valley fever;
21 however, researchers are closer than they ever have been to finding
22 a much needed vaccine to cure this devastating disease; and

23 WHEREAS, The research effort to find a vaccine and a funding
24 partnership, including funding from the State of California, were
25 approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Wilson in
26 1997; now, therefore, be it

27 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
28 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature does hereby proclaim
29 August 2009 as Valley Fever Awareness Month; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
31 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.