

Senate Joint Resolution No. 38

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 121

Senate Joint Resolution No. 38—Relative to Lyme disease.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 18, 1998.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 38, M. Thompson. Lyme disease.

This measure would memorialize the federal Food and Drug Administration to accelerate its review of product licensing applications pending before the agency and quickly approve a Lyme disease vaccine. The measure would request the State Department of Health Services to begin tracking Lyme disease, to develop, in conjunction with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and community-based support groups, a Lyme disease education program, and to consider the creation of an advisory committee to recommend changes to existing law. The measure would also request the Department of Industrial Relations to begin to review current California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) standards to ensure that those persons who work in occupations and geographical areas where exposure to the disease is likely are offered the vaccine by their employer.

WHEREAS, The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that Lyme disease continues to be a rapidly emerging infectious disease, representing the most common tick-borne illness in the nation; and

WHEREAS, The CDC reports that Lyme disease is presently in 45 states and is spreading, particularly in the western and midwestern states, with 28 states, including the State of California, reporting an increase in the incidence of the disease during 1996; and

WHEREAS, Over 16,000 cases were reported nationwide to the CDC in 1996, representing a 41-percent increase over the number of cases reported in 1995 and a 26-percent increase over those reported in 1994; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 100,000 cases have been reported to the CDC since 1982, representing a 32-fold annual increase in the number of reported cases, a figure that does not take into account the number of unreported cases due to misdiagnosis; and

WHEREAS, The CDC estimates that \$60,000,000 may be spent annually for early acute stages of the disease; and

WHEREAS, California does not currently track reported cases of Lyme disease; and

WHEREAS, The CDC, the Lyme Disease Resource Center, and the American Lyme Disease Foundation have noted that there is presently no human vaccine available to protect against the disease; and

WHEREAS, Two major vaccine manufacturers have submitted product licensing applications (PLAs) to the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA), seeking premarket approval for a Lyme disease vaccine; and

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the State of California that when vaccines are available to prevent the spread of potentially debilitating or fatal diseases every effort should be made to take all steps necessary to protect the citizens of the state, by encouraging those citizens at risk to receive the necessary vaccines; and

WHEREAS, Any delay in FDA approval will only result in the continued needless exposure of Americans to what is now a vaccine-preventable disease; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That, given the clinical severity of the disease, the FDA and the CDC are encouraged to take all steps possible to make a Lyme disease vaccine available to those persons at high risk of catching the disease; and be it further

Resolved, That the State Department of Health Services is requested to begin tracking Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases; and be it further

Resolved, That the State Department of Health Services, in conjunction with the CDC and community-based support groups, develop an education program to help doctors and other people, in those areas of the state where the disease is active, to better diagnose, treat, and prevent the contraction of Lyme disease; and be it further

Resolved, That the State Department of Health Services consider the creation of an advisory committee of experts from within the department, community-based experts, and support groups, for the purpose of recommending to the Governor and Legislature any changes necessary to existing law to help in combating Lyme disease; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Industrial Relations is requested to begin to review current California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) standards to ensure that those persons who work in occupations and geographical areas where exposure to the disease is likely are offered the vaccine by their employer; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Food and Drug Administration, to the Governor, to the State



Department of Health Services, and to the Department of Industrial Relations.

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