

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 75

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 57

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 75—Relative to Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 21, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 75, Blakeslee. Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month.

This measure would declare the month of May 2012 to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month in California.

WHEREAS, Liver disease and liver cancer are among the eight most common causes of death in California; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are the leading causes of primary liver cancer, one of the most deadly forms of cancer; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is the most prevalent bloodborne disease in the United States and in California; and

WHEREAS, While the numbers are understated due to inadequate surveillance, public health experts estimate that more than 450,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis C and 280,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis B; and

WHEREAS, An undetected and untreated hepatitis B or hepatitis C infection can lead to disability or death; and

WHEREAS, The fatality rate has doubled for hepatitis C in California since 2002; and

WHEREAS, The majority of California residents with chronic hepatitis C infection and hepatitis B infection do not know that they are infected and are, therefore, at a higher risk of severe liver disease, liver cancer, or liver failure; and

WHEREAS, Untreated hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections are leading causes of liver failure requiring a liver transplant; and

WHEREAS, There is a vaccine for the prevention of hepatitis B, which is the first proven, low-cost vaccination against any form of cancer made available to Americans; and

WHEREAS, The cost of hospitalizations for hepatitis B and hepatitis C related liver cancer, liver disease, and liver transplantation in 2010 exceeded \$2 billion in California, most of which was paid for by tax-supported, public health insurers; and

WHEREAS, Experts estimate that the annual medical costs for treating Americans with chronic hepatitis C infection are expected to increase more than 2.5 times, from \$30 billion to more than \$85 billion over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis awareness education campaigns and accessible screening for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, along with appropriate treatment, can reduce the financial, as well as physical and emotional, damage from hepatitis B and hepatitis C viral infections to individuals and to our community; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature declares the month of May 2012 to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month in California; and be it further

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