

HR 1767

2004

House Resolution

A resolution recommending increased funding at the state and federal levels for hepatitis prevention and treatment.

WHEREAS, three hepatitis viruses, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C, cause significant morbidity and mortality in Florida, and

WHEREAS, an estimated 4 million people in the United States are infected with hepatitis C, and

WHEREAS, an estimated 1.25 million persons are chronically infected with hepatitis B in the United States, and

WHEREAS, hepatitis A continues to be one of the most frequently reported vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States, and

WHEREAS, an estimated 270,000 Floridians are currently infected with hepatitis C and most are unaware of their infection, and

WHEREAS, if left undetected, hepatitis B and C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver failure, or death, and

WHEREAS, the Hepatitis and Liver Failure Prevention and Control Program of the Department of Health has integrated with other public health and private providers to enhance hepatitis prevention and control, and

WHEREAS, hepatitis A and hepatitis B are preventable by vaccination, and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults at increased risk for infection or serious consequences of infection receive vaccination for hepatitis A and hepatitis B to prevent infection and improve

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30 health, and recommends that adults at increased risk for
 31 infection or serious consequences of infection receive testing
 32 for hepatitis B and hepatitis C to become aware of their status,
 33 to prevent disease transmission, and to improve health, and

34 WHEREAS, key medical organizations are now stating that the
 35 federal and state governments have important roles in supporting
 36 not only vaccine purchase, but also in creating infrastructure
 37 that can further expand and appropriately handle more aggressive
 38 national immunization goals, and

39 WHEREAS, these organizations have recommended that the
 40 federal and state governments need additional funds to purchase
 41 vaccines for the uninsured and underinsured adult populations,
 42 and

43 WHEREAS, Florida has adopted such national immunization
 44 goals along with additional goals of increasing the testing
 45 available to adults at high risk for hepatitis C, and

46 WHEREAS, identification of hepatitis C-infected persons
 47 through laboratory testing allows for counseling to prevent
 48 further spread of the disease, along with vaccination against
 49 hepatitis A and B, which can cause additional liver damage, and

50 WHEREAS, persons with acute or chronic viral hepatitis can
 51 experience improved quality and length of life from education,
 52 social support, and medical referral, NOW, THEREFORE,

53
 54 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
 55 Florida:

56
 57 That the House of Representatives supports the prevention
 58 and control of viral hepatitis through the following measures:

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59 1. Implementing prevention and education activities by
60 state and local public health programs to counsel and screen all
61 persons at risk for viral hepatitis;

62 2. Purchasing and distributing hepatitis A and hepatitis B
63 vaccines to immunize adult residents at increased risk for
64 hepatitis infection or the serious consequences of infection;

65 3. Using both pediatric and adult hepatitis B vaccine and
66 other prevention services to immunize all children and adults at
67 increased risk, thereby eliminating transmission of hepatitis B
68 in the state;

69 4. Ensuring surveillance and evaluation of the infection
70 rates of hepatitis A, B, and C;

71 5. Implementing programs to educate all healthcare
72 providers about diagnosis, medical management, and prevention of
73 viral hepatitis; and

74 6. Enhancing the social support and medical referral
75 services available to state residents infected with viral
76 hepatitis.