

HR 9167

2008

## 1 House Resolution

2 A resolution recognizing May 2008 as "Hepatitis Awareness  
3 Month" in Florida.

4  
5 WHEREAS, since 2001, World Hepatitis Awareness Month has  
6 grown to a truly international movement, and

7 WHEREAS, World Hepatitis Awareness Month in May 2008 is an  
8 opportunity for the global hepatitis community to increase  
9 awareness of viral hepatitis and its risk factors and symptoms,  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, often described as "silent killers," both  
12 hepatitis B and hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis, liver cancer,  
13 and, ultimately, liver failure and death; however, in many  
14 cases, hepatitis can be cured or managed using currently  
15 available treatments, and

16 WHEREAS, around the world, an estimated 350-400 million  
17 people are living with hepatitis B, and more than 180 million  
18 people are infected with hepatitis C, and

19 WHEREAS, in the United States, it is estimated that as many  
20 as 2 million people are infected with hepatitis B and as many as  
21 5 million people are infected with hepatitis C, and

22 WHEREAS, an estimated 75,000 Floridians are infected with  
23 hepatitis B and an estimated 300,000 Floridians are infected  
24 with hepatitis C, and

25 WHEREAS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and  
26 Prevention have identified African-Americans, Asian-Americans,  
27 and Pacific Islanders, as well as Native Americans and Alaskan  
28 Natives, as having higher rates of viral hepatitis, and

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29 WHEREAS, the burden of chronic viral hepatitis in the  
30 United States is greatly underestimated, exemplified by the  
31 approximately 200,000 patients who are diagnosed with hepatitis  
32 B when the total adjusted prevalence is approximately 2 million  
33 people affected, and the approximately 800,000 patients who are  
34 diagnosed with hepatitis C when the total adjusted prevalence is  
35 approximately 5 million people affected, and

36 WHEREAS, the impact of late diagnosis leads to an  
37 increasing need for liver transplants and an increase in the  
38 number of cases of liver cancer, the fastest growing type of  
39 cancer in the United States while other cancers are declining,  
40 and

41 WHEREAS, there is a tremendous need for improvements in  
42 early screening, diagnosis and treatment, and effective  
43 interventions, such as testing, diagnosis, immunization, and  
44 counseling, that help to prevent and control viral hepatitis,  
45 protecting personal and community health, and

46 WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Health has a  
47 comprehensive Hepatitis Prevention Program that includes raising  
48 public awareness of viral hepatitis, providing public and  
49 professional education, tracking the burden of disease and  
50 detects outbreaks, conducting research, and offering free  
51 testing and vaccination for adults at an increased risk for  
52 infection, and

53 WHEREAS, hepatitis A and hepatitis B are preventable by  
54 vaccination and Florida's Hepatitis Prevention Program provided  
55 over 37,000 hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccines to at-risk  
56 adults in 2007 through county health departments, and

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57 WHEREAS, in 2007, Florida's Hepatitis Prevention Program  
58 tested over 24,000 at-risk adults for viral hepatitis using  
59 state laboratory services and 1,500 at-risk adults using home  
60 test kits, and

61 WHEREAS, patient groups and governments worldwide  
62 acknowledge the need for greater awareness of viral hepatitis  
63 and work together coordinating events during World Hepatitis  
64 Awareness Month to raise awareness and galvanize action, and

65 WHEREAS, the House of Representatives supports the goals  
66 and ideals of World Hepatitis Awareness Month, calls upon the  
67 people of Florida to observe the month with appropriate programs  
68 and activities, and supports raising awareness of the  
69 consequences of untreated viral hepatitis and the urgency to  
70 seek appropriate care as a serious public health issue, NOW,  
71 THEREFORE,

72

73 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of  
74 Florida:

75

76 That May 2008 is recognized as "Hepatitis Awareness Month"  
77 in Florida.