



Legislation Text

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Declaring May 2014 to be Hepatitis Awareness Month in Philadelphia to recognize and support the joint efforts of “Hep B United Philadelphia” and “Hepatitis C Allies of Philadelphia” coalitions aimed at raising the profile of Viral Hepatitis as an urgent local health priority.

WHEREAS, Viral Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver, that can be caused by viruses including the Hepatitis B Virus and the Hepatitis C Virus; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis B is the world’s most serious common liver infection that is caused by the Hepatitis B Virus; causes over 80% of primary liver cancer cases in the world; disproportionately impacts people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent, with nearly one in ten Asian Americans being chronically infected with Hepatitis B; and will result in the premature death of 1 in 4 chronically infected persons from cirrhosis, liver cancer or liver failure; and

WHEREAS, There are 3,000 new cases among Philadelphians every year, the majority of those infected are unaware of their infection, infection rates in Philadelphia Asian communities range from 4%-23%, and less than 40% of high-risk individuals are vaccinated against Hepatitis B; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis B is completely preventable with a safe and effective vaccine; and can be diagnosed with a simple blood test and treated with approved therapies to control the disease and stop progression to liver cancer, liver failure and death; and the United States Preventive Services Task Force updated their recommendation in February, 2014 for all high-risk individuals, including most foreign-born individuals, to be tested for Hepatitis B; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is a serious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis C Virus; causes severe liver conditions including fibrosis, cirrhosis and liver cancer; over 40,000 Philadelphians are living with Hepatitis C; up to 75% of the people infected with Hepatitis C don’t know they have it; and

WHEREAS, A Cure for Hepatitis C is now available; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that ALL foreign-born and first generation Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders get tested; and the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all persons born between 1945 and 1965 get tested for Hepatitis C; and

WHEREAS, Hep B United Philadelphia is celebrating its fifth year as the largest local community-based coalition working to eliminate health disparities faced by Asians and Pacific Islander Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Hep B United Philadelphia and Hepatitis C Allies of Philadelphia have worked together since 2011 to successfully position Philadelphia as a national leader in the fight against viral hepatitis by mobilizing local stakeholders to raise the public profile of viral hepatitis as an urgent health priority, establish strong private-public partnerships, identify gaps in local Hepatitis B and C services and develop collaborative and innovative projects to improve access to Hepatitis prevention, testing, and treatment services; and

WHEREAS, Efforts to fight viral hepatitis by Hep B United Philadelphia and Hepatitis C Allies of Philadelphia are supported by the people of Philadelphia, including multitudes of community members, healthcare institutions, schools of medicine and public health, students, community and cultural organizations, local businesses, academics, and the Philadelphia Medical Society; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That May 2014 is declared Hepatitis Awareness Month in Philadelphia to recognize and support the joint efforts of “Hep B United Philadelphia” and “Hepatitis C Allies of Philadelphia” aimed at raising the profile of viral hepatitis and liver cancer as an urgent health priority.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia supports appropriate testing for viral Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C for all high-risk Philadelphians.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of the resolution be presented to the Hepatitis B Foundation as the lead organization of Hep B United Philadelphia, and to Dr. Stacey Trooskin, Co-Chair of the Hepatitis B Allies of Philadelphia, further evidencing the sincere support and admiration of this legislative body.