

Legislation Text

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Declaring May 2012 to be Hepatitis B Awareness Month in Philadelphia to recognize and support the “Hep B United Philadelphia Campaign” aimed at raising the profile of Hepatitis B and liver cancer as an urgent health priority.

WHEREAS, Hepatitis B is the world’s most serious common liver infection that is caused by the Hepatitis B virus; 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, Hepatitis B is completely preventable with a safe and effective vaccine that is known as the “first anti-cancer vaccine” since it can prevent liver cancer; 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

WHEREAS, There is an important Hepatitis B Philadelphia Story in that the Hepatitis B virus was discovered by Dr. Baruch Blumberg at the Fox Chase Cancer Center, and he invented the first Hepatitis B vaccine that is now manufactured by only two companies which are both located in the Philadelphia region. The first animal that was discovered to be the most useful in studying Hepatitis B was a groundhog living at the Philadelphia Zoo. And, the only national nonprofit dedicated to finding a cure for Hepatitis B was established in the Philadelphia Area; and

WHEREAS, There are 3,000 new cases among Philadelphians every year, the majority of those infected are unaware of their infection, and the highest infection rates in Philadelphia are: 23 % of Chinese Americans, 9% of African Americans, 6% of Vietnamese Americans, and 4% of Korean Americans; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia, the Hep B United Philadelphia Coalition is holding an event on May 18th in Love Park in support of the “Hep B United Philadelphia Campaign” to promote both vaccinations and testing for early detection, which will save thousands of lives; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That May 2012 is declared Hepatitis B Awareness Month in Philadelphia to recognize and support the “Hep B United Philadelphia Campaign” aimed at raising the profile of Hepatitis B and liver cancer as an urgent health priority.

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