

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 250

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 191

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 250—Relative to hepatitis C.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 18, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 250, Cedillo. Hepatitis C.

This measure would recommend implementation of various prevention and educational activities in order to address the health crisis associated with the hepatitis C virus.

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C virus infection is the most common chronic blood borne viral infection in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Nearly two in every 100 Americans are infected; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control estimates the hepatitis C virus to have infected 500,000 Californians, more than any other state in the union; and

WHEREAS, The hepatitis C rate among veterans is roughly four times the rate of the general population; and

WHEREAS, Forty percent of inmates in California prisons are infected with hepatitis C, which presents a dangerous situation for prisoners, corrections staff, and the public as these infected inmates are released to the street on parole; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C can live largely undetected in the body for 20 to 30 years; and

WHEREAS, Infected individuals, who are unaware they are infected, can unknowingly transmit the virus to others for decades, while their own livers are slowly deteriorating; and

WHEREAS, No vaccine is available for hepatitis C; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C causes up to one-half of all the liver cancer cases in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Twenty percent of all patients with chronic hepatitis C will develop cirrhosis, which is when healthy liver cells are replaced by scar tissue that can prevent the liver from functioning properly; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 50 percent of all liver transplants in the United States are performed for end-stage hepatitis C, however reinfection of the transplanted liver by the virus usually occurs and the patient may require a second transplant; and

WHEREAS, The demand for liver transplants is expected to jump by 500 percent by 2008; and



WHEREAS, Ten thousand Americans a year are dying from hepatitis C; and

WHEREAS, By the end of the decade, the annual death toll could easily reach 30,000, which is twice the toll that AIDS takes in America each year; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature is concerned about the health crisis associated with hepatitis C and hereby recommends:

- (1) Implementation of prevention and educational activities to counsel, screen, and treat persons at risk for hepatitis C virus infection.
- (2) Monitoring and evaluation of the infection rate of hepatitis C.
- (3) Implementation of outreach and community-based programs to educate health care professionals concerning diagnosis, medical management, and prevention.

