

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 261 Session of 2011

INTRODUCED BY SCAVELLO, BAKER, BEAR, BOYD, BROOKS, CUTLER, DALEY, DIGIROLAMO, EVERETT, GEIST, GEORGE, GRELL, HARKINS, HARPER, HEFFLEY, HENNESSEY, HICKERNELL, KILLION, KORTZ, MAJOR, MANN, MILLARD, O'NEILL, QUINN, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROCK, ROSS, SANTONI, K. SMITH, SONNEY, STABACK, TOOHL, VULAKOVICH, WATSON, YOUNGBLOOD, COHEN, M. O'BRIEN, GINGRICH, RAPP AND GOODMAN, MAY 3, 2011

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, MAY 3, 2011

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2011 as "Hepatitis Awareness Month"
2 in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Hepatitis is a liver disease caused by one of five
4 forms of the hepatitis virus; and

5 WHEREAS, Hepatitis infects individuals of all ages, ethnic
6 groups and socioeconomic classes in urban and rural areas of
7 this Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, The hepatitis viruses, designated as A, B, C, D and
9 E, cause infections which are generally asymptomatic but which
10 lead to liver inflammation; and

11 WHEREAS, Hepatitis A is contracted primarily through
12 contaminated food or water; and

13 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is the leading reason for liver
14 transplantation and now exceeds HIV/AIDS by a 5 to 1 ratio; and

15 WHEREAS, On average, two people are diagnosed with hepatitis-

1 related liver disease and two people die from liver cancer each
2 day in the United States; and

3 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization has characterized
4 hepatitis B and hepatitis C as diseases of primary concern for
5 humanity; and

6 WHEREAS, Hepatitis A and hepatitis B can easily be prevented
7 through awareness of transmission routes and through available
8 vaccines; and

9 WHEREAS, An estimated 280,000 residents of this Commonwealth
10 are infected with hepatitis C, and 75% to 85% of these persons
11 are chronically infected; and

12 WHEREAS, In the absence of a vaccine for hepatitis C,
13 emphasis must be placed on other means of disease prevention,
14 including education of health care workers, emergency services
15 workers, veterans and the general public; and

16 WHEREAS, Chronic viral hepatitis is a disease with little or
17 no public awareness since it is largely asymptomatic until
18 irreversible liver damage has occurred; and

19 WHEREAS, In the past year, five new hepatitis screening sites
20 have opened in this Commonwealth; and

21 WHEREAS, There remains a need for more hepatitis screening
22 and testing sites in this Commonwealth; therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
24 month of May 2011 as "Hepatitis Awareness Month" in
25 Pennsylvania; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage State
27 agencies, health care providers and residents of this
28 Commonwealth to learn and educate others about the causes,
29 symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis, with prevention
30 being the primary focus among younger Pennsylvanians; and be it

1 further

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage State
3 agencies and health care providers to integrate hepatitis
4 services with existing services that target similar risks
5 groups, such as HIV and AIDS targeted populations, and to
6 connect persons with hepatitis with appropriate care using the
7 Commonwealth's resource directory.