
By: **Delegates Nathan-Pulliam, Benson, Branch, Burns, Cane, C. Davis, DeCarlo, Dypski, Fulton, Gladden, Griffith, Harrison, Hill, Howard, Hubers, A. Jones, V. Jones, Kirk, Klausmeier, Krysiak, Marriott, Menes, Montague, Morhaim, Oaks, Paige, Patterson, Phillips, Proctor, Turner, and Zirkin**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2001
Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a statewide public information program aimed at
4 adolescents to prevent the spread of hepatitis A, B, and C; requiring the
5 Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to consult with the State Department
6 of Education to develop an outreach program; requiring the public information
7 program to provide certain information on education, prevention, and treatment
8 of hepatitis A, B, and C; requiring the program to educate health care providers,
9 educators, adolescents and general public about certain aspects of hepatitis A, B,
10 and C; requiring the Secretary to use certain mass media under certain
11 circumstances; authorizing the Secretary, subject to certain conditions, to
12 implement a program to evaluate the effectiveness of the public information
13 program; and generally relating to the education on the danger of contracting
14 hepatitis A, B, and C.

15 BY adding to
16 Article - Health - General
17 Section 18-901 through 18-905 to be under the new subtitle "Subtitle 9.
18 Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention Act"
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2000 Replacement Volume)

21 Preamble

22 WHEREAS, Hepatitis B and C are silent killers largely asymptomatic until
23 irreversible liver damage occurs; and

24 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is characterized by the World Health Organization as a
25 disease of primary concern to humanity; and

1 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C currently infects approximately 4.5 million Americans
2 and there are approximately 30,000 new infections each year in the United States;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control estimates that approximately
5 12,000 individuals die each year from the consequences of hepatitis C and this
6 number is expected to rise; and

7 WHEREAS, Approximately 90,000 citizens of Maryland are infected with
8 hepatitis C; and

9 WHEREAS, Hepatitis A is a foodborne and waterborne disease that accounts for
10 one-third to one-half of all hepatitis cases in this country and in rare cases, can be
11 fatal; and

12 WHEREAS, In the United States most persons with hepatitis B acquire the
13 infection as adolescents or adults; and

14 WHEREAS, Hepatitis is spreading more rapidly among adolescents than any
15 other age group; and

16 WHEREAS, There are vaccines available to protect individuals from hepatitis A
17 and B; and

18 WHEREAS, Efforts to vaccinate individuals in the major risk groups have had
19 limited success; and

20 WHEREAS, In the absence of a vaccine for hepatitis C, emphasis must be placed
21 on other means of disease awareness and prevention, including education of health
22 care providers, educators, adolescents, and the general public; now, therefore,

23 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
24 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

25 **Article - Health - General**

26 **SUBTITLE 9. HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION.**

27 18-901.

28 (A) THE SECRETARY SHALL ESTABLISH AND PROMOTE A STATEWIDE PUBLIC
29 INFORMATION PROGRAM ON HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION.

30 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE STATEWIDE PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM ON
31 HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION IS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD
32 OF HEPATITIS IN THE GENERAL POPULATION.

1 18-902.

2 THE SECRETARY SHALL:

3 (1) IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
4 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR
5 GENERAL PUBLIC TO:

6 (I) RAISE AWARENESS OF THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS A, B, AND C;
7 AND

8 (II) PROVIDE INFORMATION ON RISK FACTORS, THE VALUE OF
9 EARLY DETECTION, AND THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS A,
10 B, AND C; AND

11 (2) DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO EDUCATE ADOLESCENTS,
12 TEENAGERS, HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, EDUCATORS, AND GENERAL PUBLIC IN:

13 (I) THE EPIDEMIOLOGY, NATURAL HISTORY, DETECTION, AND
14 TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS A, B, AND C; AND

15 (II) THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BECOMING INFECTED WITH
16 HEPATITIS B AND C AND BECOMING INFECTED WITH HIV.

17 18-903.

18 SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE STATE BUDGET, THE SECRETARY SHALL
19 MAKE EXTENSIVE USE OF MASS MEDIA THAT WILL BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS
20 FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT HEPATITIS A, B, AND C TO GENERAL PUBLIC.

21 18-904.

22 THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE STATEWIDE INFORMATION PROGRAM ON
23 HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION SHALL:

24 (1) BE CLEAR, COMPLETE, AND ACCURATE; AND

25 (2) EMPHASIZE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO PREVENT
26 CONTRACTING HEPATITIS A, B, AND C.

27 18-905.

28 SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE STATE BUDGET, THE SECRETARY SHALL
29 ESTABLISH GUIDELINES FOR MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM.

30 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
31 October 1, 2001.