

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 12

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2001 Regular Session
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By: **Delegate Nathan-Pulliam**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2001

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Federal Funding for a Hepatitis A and B Vaccination Program**

3 FOR the purpose of urging the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to seek
4 federal funds to offset the cost to the State of providing vaccines for hepatitis A
5 and B; urging the Secretary to apply for federal funds to offset the cost of
6 administering a vaccination program for hepatitis A and B; requiring the
7 Secretary to make a certain report under certain conditions; and generally
8 relating to seeking federal funds for a hepatitis A and B vaccination program.

9 WHEREAS, Hepatitis B is a silent killer which is largely asymptomatic until
10 irreversible liver damage occurs; and

11 WHEREAS, Hepatitis B virus is a serious disease that can cause a lifelong
12 infection, cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, and death; and

13 WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control estimate that 1 out of every
14 20 individuals will become infected with hepatitis B during their lifetime; and

15 WHEREAS, Hepatitis A is a food-borne and water-borne disease that accounts
16 for one-third to one-half of all hepatitis cases in this country and in rare cases can be
17 fatal; and

18 WHEREAS, Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus that
19 can affect anyone; and

20 WHEREAS, Maryland has an infection rate for hepatitis A ranging from 5 to 10
21 cases per 100,000 in the northern and western parts of the State to more than 20
22 cases per 100,000 in the Metropolitan Baltimore area; and

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

25 WHEREAS, There are vaccines available to protect individuals from hepatitis A
26 and B; and

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

1 WHEREAS, If the State could provide a low-cost vaccine program, more people
2 could be vaccinated; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is urged to seek
4 funding to defray the cost of providing hepatitis A and B vaccines to the citizens of
5 Maryland; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is urged to seek
7 funding to defray administrative costs of a program to administer hepatitis A and B
8 vaccines to the citizens of Maryland; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is urged to seek
10 funding through federal programs offered by the Centers for Disease Control, the
11 National Institute of Infectious Diseases, the Department of Health and Human
12 Services, or other federal agencies to offset the costs of providing vaccines and
13 administering a program to vaccinate the citizens of Maryland to prevent the spread
14 of hepatitis A and B; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That, on or before October 1, 2002, if the Secretary takes action
16 under this joint resolution, the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene shall report
17 the results of seeking federal funding for a hepatitis vaccination program to the
18 Governor and, subject to the provisions of § 2-1246 of the State Government Article,
19 to the General Assembly; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Secretary
21 Georges C. Benjamin, M.D., Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 201 W.
22 Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
24 Legislative Services to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland;
25 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and
26 the Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates.