

**Department of Legislative Services**

Maryland General Assembly

2001 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Joint Resolution 12 (Delegate Nathan-Pulliam)

Environmental Matters

Economic and Environmental Affairs

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

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This joint resolution urges the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to seek federal funds to offset the cost to the State of administering a vaccination program and providing vaccines for hepatitis A and B, and requires the Secretary to report the results of any such efforts to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 1, 2002.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Should the terms of this resolution be complied with expenditures could increase by \$6,090 in FY 2002 to hire one contractual program administrator for two months to develop the application for federal funding.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** None applicable.

**Background:** Over 5 million people in the United States are currently infected with some form of hepatitis. Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver, and is caused most often by a virus. The most common types of hepatitis are hepatitis A, B, and C. Hepatitis A is the least serious form. A small proportion of individuals with hepatitis B develop chronic disease, in which the illness lasts longer than six months. Chronic hepatitis B and chronic hepatitis C are the most serious forms of hepatitis. Both pose risks of long-term

medical complications, especially if left untreated. For the most part, people with hepatitis can infect others. Hepatitis B and C are usually spread from one person to another by direct exposure to infected blood or blood products, and needles or other sharp objects. Hepatitis B is also frequently spread through sexual contact and from mother to baby at birth, and can also be transmitted by sharing toothbrushes or nail files. Hepatitis C is rarely spread sexually, from an infected mother to her newborn, or to other members of the household. The major risk factors for acquiring hepatitis C are intravenous drug use and transfusion of blood and blood products prior to 1992. Other risk factors include tattooing, body piercing, and sharing toothbrushes or nail files. A vaccine is available to help protect people against hepatitis B, but at this time there is no available vaccine to protect against hepatitis C.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Schering AG Corporation, Department of Legislative Services

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