

HOUSE BILL 1035

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HB 655/01 - ENV

2002 Regular Session
2lr0615

By: **Delegates Nathan-Pulliam and Frush**
Introduced and read first time: February 8, 2002
Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Disease Prevention - Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention**
3 **Program**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing a statewide public information program on hepatitis
5 A, B, and C education and prevention; providing for the purpose of the program;
6 requiring the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to develop and
7 implement a certain public education and outreach program that includes
8 certain information about hepatitis A, B, and C; requiring the program to
9 emphasize measures that can be taken to prevent contracting hepatitis A, B,
10 and C; requiring the Secretary to make use of certain media outlets, subject to
11 the provisions of the State budget; requiring the Secretary to establish certain
12 guidelines for measuring the success of the program; providing for a delayed
13 effective date; and generally relating to the hepatitis A, B, and C education and
14 prevention program.

15 BY adding to
16 Article - Health - General
17 Section 18-901 through 18-904 to be under the new subtitle "Subtitle 9.
18 Hepatitis A, B, and C Education and Prevention Program"
19 Annotated Code of Maryland
20 (2000 Replacement Volume and 2001 Supplement)

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
25 a disease of primary concern to humanity; and

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

1 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control estimates that approximately
2 12,000 individuals die each year from the consequences of hepatitis C and this
3 number is expected to rise; and

4 WHEREAS, Approximately 100,000 citizens of Maryland are infected with
5 hepatitis C; and

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

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

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

13 WHEREAS, There are vaccines available to protect individuals from hepatitis
14 A and B; and

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

17 WHEREAS, In the absence of a vaccine for hepatitis C, emphasis must be
18 placed on other means of disease awareness and prevention, including education of
19 the general public; now, therefore,

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

22 **Article - Health - General**

23 SUBTITLE 9. HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM.

24 18-901.

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

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

30 18-902.

31 (A) THE SECRETARY SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PUBLIC EDUCATION
32 AND OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT:

33 (1) RAISES AWARENESS OF THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS A, B, AND C;

1 (2) EDUCATES THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT THE EPIDEMIOLOGY AND
2 NATURAL HISTORY OF THE VIRUS;

3 (3) PROVIDES INFORMATION ON RISK FACTORS, THE VALUE OF EARLY
4 DETECTION, AND THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS A, B, AND
5 C, INCLUDING VACCINATIONS FOR HEPATITIS A AND B;

6 (4) DISCUSSES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BECOMING INFECTED
7 WITH HEPATITIS B AND C AND BECOMING INFECTED WITH HIV THROUGH SEXUAL
8 CONTACT AND THE SHARING OF INFECTED NEEDLES;

9 (5) PROVIDES DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT STATE RESOURCES FOR
10 OBTAINING HELP TO DETECT, TREAT, AND PREVENT HEPATITIS A, B, AND C; AND

11 (6) PROVIDES THE PROPER TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR LOCAL HEALTH
12 DEPARTMENT RESOURCES AND THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE ADDRESS.

13 (B) THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE STATEWIDE INFORMATION
14 PROGRAM ON HEPATITIS A, B, AND C EDUCATION AND PREVENTION SHALL
15 EMPHASIZE MEASURES THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO PREVENT CONTRACTING HEPATITIS
16 A, B, AND C.

17 18-903.

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

22 18-904.

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

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
26 effect October 1, 2003.