Public Law 99-28
99th Congress

Joint Resolution

Apr. 25, 1985
[S.J. Res. 63]

To designate the week of April 21, 1985, through April 27, 1985, as "National DES Awareness Week".

Whereas Diethylstibestrol (DES), a powerful synthetic hormone was given to over three million pregnant women in the United States from 1941 to 1971 for the purpose of reducing miscarriages, despite reports as early as the 1950's that the drug was ineffective;

Whereas it is estimated that over three million "DES daughters and sons" were also exposed in utero;

Whereas mothers who have been exposed to DES have been demonstrated to have a higher incidence of breast cancer with that risk becoming increasingly more pronounced with age;

Whereas approximately one out of one-thousand DES daughters will develop a rare cancer of the cervix and vagina known as Clear-Cell Adenocarcinoma;

Whereas these cancer victims are subject to hysterectomies, vaginectomies and lymphotomies with a 25 percent possibility of death as a result of such exposure;

Whereas a second type of cervical and vaginal cancer known as cervical dysplasia (pre-cancerous) and carcinoma in situ (CIS) has been shown to have a higher incidence in DES daughters affecting more than eighty-thousand women with at least five thousand developing the actual cancer;

Whereas problems with pregnancies have been reported to affect a large proportion of DES daughters including ectopic pregnancies, miscarriages, infertility and premature deliveries;

Whereas DES sons have shown a higher incidence of maldescent of the testes, a known risk factor for testicular cancer; and

Whereas identification, appropriate evaluation, and treatment of individuals exposed to DES is dependent upon a greater public awareness: Now, therefore, be it

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Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the week of April 21, 1985, through April 27, 1985, is designated as "National DES Awareness Week" and the President is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such week with appropriate activities.

Approved April 25, 1985.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 63:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 131 (1985):
Apr. 15, considered and passed Senate.
Apr. 18, considered and passed House.