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INFORMATION
GPO

H. Res. 250

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

May 5, 2005.

Whereas hepatitis B is the most common serious liver infection in the world;

Whereas chronic hepatitis B infections cause 80 percent of all primary liver cancer cases worldwide;

Whereas 10,000,000 to 30,000,000 people will be infected with the hepatitis B virus worldwide in 2005;

Whereas approximately 100,000 people in the United States will become infected with hepatitis B virus this year alone;

Whereas fewer than 10 percent of diagnosed chronic hepatitis B patients in the United States are currently receiving treatment for their disease;

Whereas healthcare and work loss costs from liver disease and liver cancer-caused hepatitis B infections total more than $700,000,000 annually;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (''CDC'') estimates that 1,250,000 Americans are already infected with hepatitis B and nearly 6,000 will die of liver complications each year;

Whereas a person who has become infected with hepatitis B may not have symptoms for up to 40 years after the ini-

tial infection has occurred, and there is currently no routine screening in place for early detection;

Whereas the CDC has identified African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Pacific Islanders, as well as Native Americans and Alaskan Natives, as having higher rates of hepatitis B infection in the United States;

Whereas Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders account for more than half of the chronic hepatitis B cases and half of the deaths resulting from chronic hepatitis B infection in the United States;

Whereas there is a need for a comprehensive public education and awareness campaign designed to help infected patients and their physicians identify and manage the secondary prevention of the disease and to help increase the length and quality of life for those diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B; and

Whereas the week of May 9, 2005, would be an appropriate week to observe National Hepatitis B Awareness Week: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Hepatitis B Awareness Week;

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate programs and activities; and

(3) supports raising awareness of the consequences of untreated chronic hepatitis B and the urgency to seek appropriate care as a serious public health issue.

Attest:

Clerk.