

my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in cosponsoring this effort.

Viral hepatitis is known as a silent killer because it can stay a-symptomatic for years before it leads to serious liver disease. It is the most common cause of liver cancer and yet doctors and patients alike are often largely uninformed about this disease. Hepatitis B is 100 times more infectious than HIV and has spread to an estimated 2 billion people worldwide while hepatitis C has reached about 170 million people. Chronic viral hepatitis is widespread and it is dangerous.

Last year, the Institute of Medicine released a report outlining a number of specific recommendations on how to combat viral hepatitis. To build on those recommendations, Assistant Secretary of Health Dr. Howard Koh convened a task force and developed a detailed, comprehensive action plan to combat the pervasive spread of this disease. These recommendations served as the foundation for the legislation I am proposing today.

As of today, there is no coordinated national strategy in place to fight viral hepatitis. The action plan put forward by Dr. Koh and his team seeks to rectify that problem by incorporating standardized viral hepatitis prevention and treatment programs into the health care infrastructure that already exists. The bill I introduced today would quickly implement a number of these programs and provides the Department of Health and Human Services with the resources to act.

The first step in prevention is determining who is infected with the virus so they can receive the appropriate care and will be less likely to pass on this disease to others. In order to determine the prevalence of the problem and to increase the number of people who are aware of their infection, The Viral Hepatitis Testing Act calls for HHS to work with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Preventive Services Task Force to develop and implement effective surveillance and testing protocols. Whereas 75 percent of people carrying viral hepatitis today do not even know they are infected, improved testing could flip that disturbing statistic on its head in just 5 years.

It is also a sad reality that a number of minority populations are at greatly increased risk for contracting viral hepatitis. Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders account for over half of chronic hepatitis B cases. African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians and Native Alaskans also have disproportionately high rates of these viruses. Additionally, without the proper preventative care, there is a high likelihood that pregnant women who carry the virus will pass it on to their unborn children.

For those reasons, the legislation I introduced today also focuses on screening and treating high-risk populations and pregnant mothers for viral

hepatitis. Educational programs targeting high-risk groups will empower people to protect themselves from contracting hepatitis, and ensuring that people who have viral hepatitis receive the appropriate follow-up care will further help to prevent the spread of this epidemic.

Additionally, providing doctors with the proper training on the causes, symptoms, and treatments would also go a long way toward stemming the tide of transmission and improving outcomes for patients who have contracted the disease. This legislation makes supplemental viral hepatitis training for health care professionals a priority.

To do the things we need to do in order to save lives and control this deadly epidemic, we are going to have to make a relatively modest investment. The Viral Hepatitis Testing Act appropriates \$110 million over 5 years that will go toward implementing the educational, screening, and treatment measures required under this act. Rather than creating a whole new hepatitis prevention apparatus, this funding will be used to integrate these new and improved procedures into the existing health care infrastructure through grants to public and nonprofit private entities, including States, Indian tribes, and public-private partnerships.

The human benefits of this legislation are undeniable—these provisions will reduce transmission, improve the quality of life for people with viral hepatitis, and prevent the deaths of countless mothers and fathers and children. It is also undeniable that this is a wise investment of resources and good policy. These investments are a classic case of using limited resources to maximum impact, as we invest a modest amount of money today in order to save lives, pain, and tens of billions of dollars tomorrow.

Today, hepatitis B costs patients around \$2.5 billion per year. With baby boomers aging into Medicare and accounting for an estimated two out of every three cases of chronic hepatitis C, medical costs for treating this disease are expected to skyrocket from \$30 billion to more than \$85 billion in 2024. Late diagnosis is a significant driver of costs, as more expensive procedures and treatments are required the further the infection has progressed. To put this in even starker terms, the cost of the hepatitis B vaccine ranges from \$75 to \$165, while treatment can cost up to \$16 thousand per year for a single person, or up to \$110 thousand per hospital visit, should the disease develop into liver cancer.

Viral hepatitis is an increasingly significant issue for Massachusetts. The Department of Public Health reports over 2,000 cases of newly diagnosed chronic Hepatitis B infection and 8,000 to 10,000 cases of newly diagnosed chronic Hepatitis C infection each year. Viral hepatitis is the highest volume of reportable infectious diseases in

the state. Additionally, there continues to be a striking increase in cases of hepatitis C infection among adolescents and young adults in the State, which suggests that there is a new epidemic of the disease taking hold.

Until recently, the Massachusetts State Legislature provided \$1.4 million for surveillance to detect outbreaks and behaviors of concern as well as for targeted screening and treatment of high-risk populations. Today, however, as this public health threat spreads, all of that funding has been eliminated due to budget cuts. Massachusetts receives just \$104,305 from the CDC for an Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator. This is a valuable position but it is not nearly enough to support core public health services. The Viral Hepatitis Testing Act will allow Massachusetts to invest in a sustainable infrastructure that would improve health care for our citizens.

The choice is ours: we can either invest in preventative programs and more robust screening now or we can just let this epidemic continue to proliferate around the country and foot the bill later for the expensive surgical procedures, medicines, and hospital bills that will only continue to grow.

Without action, thousands more Americans will die year from preventable diseases. We know what we need to do; now it is up to us to do it. Let us not make excuses. Let us lower health care costs for American families, improve the quality of our care, and save lives. I again urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 310—DESIGNATING 2012 AS THE “YEAR OF THE GIRL” AND CONGRATULATING GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 310

Whereas, for more than 100 years, Girl Scouts of the USA (referred to in this preamble as “Girl Scouts”) has inspired girls to lead with courage, confidence and character;

Whereas the Girl Scout movement began on March 12, 1912, when Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low (a native of Savannah, Georgia) organized a group of 18 girls and provided the girls with the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually;

Whereas the goal of Daisy Low was to bring together girls of all backgrounds to develop self-reliance and resourcefulness, and to prepare each girl for a future role as a professional woman and active citizen outside the home;

Whereas, within a few years, there were nearly 70,000 Girl Scouts throughout the United States, including the territory of Hawaii;

Whereas Girl Scouts established the first troops for African-American girls in 1917 and the first troops for girls with disabilities in 1920;

Whereas today more than 50,000,000 women in the United States are alumnae of the Girl Scouts, and approximately 3,300,000 girls and adult volunteers are active members of the Girl Scouts;

Whereas Girl Scouts live in every corner of the United States, Puerto Rico, the territories of the United States, and more than 90 countries overseas;

Whereas Girl Scouts is the largest member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a global movement comprised of more than 10,000,000 girls in 145 countries worldwide;

Whereas the robust program of Girl Scouts helps girls develop as leaders and build confidence by learning new skills;

Whereas the award-winning Girl Scout Leadership Program helps each girl discover herself and her values;

Whereas the Girl Scout Leadership Program leadership model helps girls develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, cooperation and team building, conflict resolution, advocacy, and other important life skills;

Whereas core programs around Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (referred to in this preamble as “STEM”), environmental stewardship, healthy living, financial literacy, and global citizenship help girls develop a solid foundation in leadership;

Whereas STEM programming, first introduced in 1913 with the “electrician” and “flyer” badges, offers girls of every age science, technology, engineering, and math activities that are relevant to everyday life;

Whereas the award-winning STEM program helps girls build strong, hands-on foundations to become future female leaders and meet the growing need for skilled science and technology professionals in the United States;

Whereas healthy living programs—

(1) help each Girl Scout build the skills necessary to maintain a healthy body, an engaged mind, and a positive spirit; and

(2) teach girls about fitness and nutrition, body image, self-esteem, and relational issues, especially bullying;

Whereas through the 100th Anniversary Take Action Project, “Girl Scouts Forever Green”, Girl Scouts is honoring the commitment of Juliette Low to the outdoors by engaging families, friends, and communities to improve the environment and protect the natural resources of the United States;

Whereas the financial literacy programming of Girl Scouts, most notably the iconic Girl Scout Cookie Program, helps girls set financial goals and gain the confidence needed to ultimately take control of their own financial future;

Whereas the beloved tradition of the Girl Scout Cookie Program has a proven legacy in the United States, as more than 80 percent of highly successful businesswomen were Girl Scouts;

Whereas Girl Scouts has also helped millions of young girls become good global citizens through international exchanges, travel, “take action” and service projects, and newer programs such as “twinning” (where girls in the United States connect with girls in other countries) and virtual Girl Scout troops;

Whereas Girl Scouts has helped girls advance diversity in a multicultural world, connect with local and global communities, and feel empowered to make a difference in the world;

Whereas the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor in Girl Scouting, requires a girl to make a measurable and sustainable difference in the community by—

(1) assessing a need;

(2) designing a solution;

(3) finding the resources and the support to implement the solution;

(4) completing the project; and

(5) inspiring others to sustain the project;

Whereas the Gold Award honors leadership in the Girl Scout tradition because Gold Award recipients have already changed the world as high school students;

Whereas two-thirds of the most accomplished women in public service in the United States were Girl Scouts;

Whereas research by Girl Scouts shows that Girl Scouts alumnae—

(1) have a positive sense of self;

(2) are engaged in community service;

(3) are civically engaged;

(4) have attained high levels of education; and

(5) are successful according to many economic indicators;

Whereas, in addition to the outstanding programs that Girl Scouts offers, Girl Scouts has evolved into the premier expert on the healthy growth and development of girls;

Whereas, since the founding of the Girl Scout Research Institute in 2000, the Institute has become an internationally recognized center for original research, research reviews, and surveys that provide significant insights into the lives of girls;

Whereas the research conducted by Girl Scouts not only informs Girl Scout program development and delivery, but also helps bring the voice of girls to key issues in the public sphere;

Whereas, by bringing greater attention to the health, education, and developmental needs of girls, Girl Scouts provides a voice for girls with policymakers, business leaders, educators, and all other stakeholders who care about the healthy growth and development of girls;

Whereas Girl Scouts ensures that issues such as STEM education, bullying prevention, unhealthy perceptions of beauty as portrayed by the media, and many other important issues—

(1) are brought to the attention of the public; and

(2) are addressed through public policy at the national, State, and local levels; and

Whereas Girl Scouts of the USA is recognizing its 100th anniversary by designating 2012 as the “Year of the Girl”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the importance of empowering girls to lead with courage, confidence, and character;

(2) congratulates Girl Scouts of the USA on its 100th anniversary; and

(3) designates 2012 as the “Year of the Girl”.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to join Senator MIKULSKI in submitting a resolution honoring the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting. In March of 2012, the Girl Scouts of America will celebrate a century as the world’s preeminent organization dedicated solely to helping young women develop the character and skills for future success.

The Girl Scouts have a tremendous history that should be celebrated and remembered. Since this organization was founded in 1912 in by Juliette Gordon Low, more than 50 million American girls have learned the values of integrity, leadership, and volunteerism. Today, there are more than 3.7 million members in 236,000 local troops throughout the United States and its territories, Girls Scouts has a global reach, with more than 10 million members in 145 countries. As the program

continues to inspire, challenge, and empower young women across our Nation and around the world, its members are seeking to come together and recognize its 100th year of creating challenges, opportunities, and unforgettable memories.

In 2009, I introduced the Girl Scouts USA Centennial Commemorative Coin Act with Senator MIKULSKI. Our bill, which passed both the House and Senate unanimously and was signed into law by the President, directs the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative silver-dollar coins, which will be issued in 2013. Proceeds from the coin sales will benefit the Girl Scouts Centennial Year activities and the preservation of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace so that future generations of Girl Scouts will be able to pay tribute to the history of this notable organization.

With more than 16,000 girl and adult members, Girl Scouts of Maine is my State’s preeminent organization dedicated solely to girls, all girls, where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build the character and skills for success that last a lifetime. I thoroughly enjoyed my years as a Girl Scout in my hometown of Caribou, ME, including the two summers I spent at Camp Natarswi, so it gives me great pleasure to join in celebrating this important anniversary. On behalf of Girl Scouts in Maine and across America, I am pleased to introduce this resolution in celebration of 100 years of Girl Scouting.

SENATE RESOLUTION 311—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRINTING OF A COLLECTION OF THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. SCHUMER submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 311

Resolved, That a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate, together with related materials, be printed as a Senate document, and that there be printed 250 additional copies of such document for the use of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 922. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2354, making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 923. Mr. REID (for Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. TOOMEY)) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1759, to facilitate the hosting in the United States of the 34th America’s Cup by authorizing certain eligible vessels to participate in activities related to the competition.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 922. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by