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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SEEK INCREASED  
FEDERAL FUNDING TO INITIATE MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND  
WIDESPREAD HEPATITIS B EDUCATION, PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT  
PROGRAMS IN HAWAII.

1           WHEREAS, there are an estimated 800,000 to 1.4 million  
2 Americans who are chronically infected with the hepatitis B  
3 virus, of whom 20 to 30 percent acquired their infection in  
4 childhood; and

5  
6           WHEREAS, without vaccination, chronic infection of  
7 hepatitis B occurs in 90 percent of infants infected at birth,  
8 30 percent of children infected at age one to five years, and  
9 six percent of persons infected after age five; and

10  
11           WHEREAS, without vaccination against hepatitis B, death  
12 from chronic liver disease occurs in 15 to 25 percent of  
13 chronically infected persons; and

14  
15           WHEREAS, the symptoms of hepatitis B are usually jaundice,  
16 fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, and  
17 joint pain; and

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19           WHEREAS, nearly all infants and children and about 30  
20 percent of persons infected in adulthood show no outward signs  
21 or symptoms of being infected with hepatitis B; and

22  
23           WHEREAS, transmission of hepatitis B occurs when blood or  
24 body fluids from an infected person enters the body of a person  
25 who is not immune; and

26  
27           WHEREAS, the hepatitis B virus is often spread through  
28 unprotected sexual intercourse, the sharing of needles in drug  
29 abuse, exposure to drug-injection needles and other sharp  
30 instruments on the job, and transmission from an infected mother  
31 to a newborn during birth; and  
32



1 WHEREAS, the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and  
 2 Human Services' Office of Minority Health reports that chronic  
 3 hepatitis B and liver cancer caused by hepatitis B in Asian  
 4 Americans, native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders  
 5 comprise one of the most serious but frequently neglected racial  
 6 and ethnic health disparities in the U.S.; and

7  
 8 WHEREAS, while acute hepatitis B cases in the U.S. have  
 9 declined, the high frequency of chronic hepatitis B among Asian  
 10 Americans, native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders,  
 11 particularly the foreign-born, seems to have remained relatively  
 12 constant; and

13  
 14 WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii Chapter of the Liver  
 15 Foundation, Hawaii has the highest rate of liver cancer in the  
 16 country caused by hepatitis B and C, with an estimated 12,000 to  
 17 36,000 residents living with hepatitis B; and

18  
 19 WHEREAS, the best way to prevent infection with hepatitis B  
 20 is through vaccination, which has been available since 1982;  
 21 now, therefore,

22  
 23 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
 24 Twenty-Fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
 25 of 2009, that Hawaii's Congressional delegation is hereby urged  
 26 to seek increased federal funding to initiate more comprehensive  
 27 and widespread hepatitis B education, prevention, and treatment  
 28 programs in Hawaii; and

29  
 30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 31 Resolution be transmitted to Hawaii's Congressional delegation,  
 32 the Governor, and Director of Health.

33  
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OFFERED BY: Tom Brown

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H.R. NO. 269

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