
SENATE RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING FEBRUARY OF EACH YEAR AS LIVER AND BILE DUCT CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that according to the
2 National Cancer Institute's Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End
3 Results Program (SEER), Hawaii has the highest death rate of
4 liver and bile duct cancer in the nation; and

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6 WHEREAS, according to SEER, Asian and Pacific Islanders
7 have the highest risk of being diagnosed with liver and bile
8 duct cancer compared with other ethnicities; and

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10 WHEREAS, according to the University of Hawaii Cancer
11 Center Hawaii Tumor Registry, there are 184 new cases of liver
12 cancer and bile duct cancer in Hawaii every year; and

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14 WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii Tumor Registry, liver and
15 bile duct cancer are among the top ten newly diagnosed cases and
16 cause of cancer deaths each year; and

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18 WHEREAS, according to SEER, Hawaii has a 33 percent higher
19 incidence of liver and bile duct cancer than the national
20 statistical norm; and

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22 WHEREAS, according to the Hawaii Tumor Registry, from 2004
23 to 2013, data on liver cancer and bile duct cancer indicates an
24 annual increase in Hawaii of 2.1 percent in males and 1.3
25 percent in females, while the incidence of many other cancers
26 such as colon, lung, prostate, and stomach cancer declined; and

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28 WHEREAS, currently over one thousand people in Hawaii are
29 fighting liver cancer and bile duct cancer, both of which are
30 almost always fatal; and

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1 WHEREAS, research indicates that liver flukes and
2 aflatoxins may also cause liver and bile duct cancer in addition
3 to the hepatitis B or hepatitis C virus and liver diseases; and
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5 WHEREAS, liver flukes, a type of parasitic flatworm found
6 in freshwater fish, shellfish, cattle, and vegetables grown in
7 fresh water, have been previously found in Hawaii; and
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9 WHEREAS, aflatoxins, a toxin produced by a fungus abundant
10 in warm and humid climates that can grow on foods such as rice,
11 grains, and nuts that are stored improperly or for long periods
12 of time may also be present in Hawaii; and
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14 WHEREAS, research shows that the most common way to get a
15 liver fluke infection is by eating raw or undercooked freshwater
16 fish and freshwater vegetables, such as watercress, that are
17 contaminated with the parasites, which, after having been
18 ingested, travel from the intestines to the bile ducts in the
19 liver where they then live and grow; and
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21 WHEREAS, there is little public awareness and education
22 around liver and bile duct cancer and the relationship and risks
23 that Hawaii's local diet and environment present to increasing
24 the risk of contracting these diseases; and
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26 WHEREAS, it is critical to reinforce the need for people to
27 discuss their individual risk factors for liver and bile duct
28 cancer with their health care providers and understand the
29 recommendations and benefits of reducing risks and increasing
30 prevention efforts; now, therefore,
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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
33 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that beginning
34 in 2020, and every year thereafter, the month of February shall
35 be designated as Liver and Bile Duct Cancer Awareness Month in
36 Hawaii; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health;
39 University of Hawaii Cancer Center; American Cancer Society
40 Cancer Action Network, Inc.; City and County of Honolulu; and
41 Counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui are urged to continue to
42 work toward promoting awareness and educating the public about



1 liver and bile duct cancer and the relationship and risks the
2 local diet and environment may have on contracting the disease;
3 and

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
6 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; Mayor of the City and
7 County of Honolulu; Mayor of the County of Kauai; Mayor of the
8 County of Maui; Mayor of the County of Hawaii; Director of
9 Health; Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center; and
10 President of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network,
11 Inc.

