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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING ONGOING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS BY STATE AGENCIES AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE "HEP FREE 2030" STATEWIDE STRATEGY TO ELIMINATE VIRAL HEPATITIS TYPES A, B, AND C IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, viral hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver  
2 caused by a viral infection; and

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4 WHEREAS, the most common forms of viral hepatitis in the  
5 United States are hepatitis types A, B, and C; and

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7 WHEREAS, viral hepatitis types B and C have been linked to  
8 cirrhosis and liver cancer, diseases that affect the State's  
9 residents at disproportionately high rates; and

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11 WHEREAS, recent data has shown higher rates of hepatitis B  
12 deaths in Hawaii compared to the general United States, with  
13 three times higher death rates in 2019 alone; and

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15 WHEREAS, recent data has also shown a twenty year lower  
16 life expectancy among people living with hepatitis C in Hawaii  
17 compared to the rest of the State's population; and

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19 WHEREAS, communities at higher risk for developing viral  
20 hepatitis include people who are indigenous, African American,  
21 incarcerated, veterans, experiencing homelessness, pregnant, or  
22 members of the LGBTQ+ community; and

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24 WHEREAS, the State is currently engaged in proactive  
25 measures to help eliminate viral hepatitis in underserved and  
26 at-risk communities by expanding Med-QUEST to cover hepatitis C  
27 medications; offering syringe service programs to reduce the  
28 spread of hepatitis C among people who use injectable drugs;  
29 identifying and supporting foreign-born women and families at  
30 high risk of contracting hepatitis B; and ensuring that homeless  
31 communities are immunized against hepatitis A; and



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WHEREAS, state agencies and private organizations are also helping to reduce and eliminate viral hepatitis types A, B, and C by offering vaccines, testing, education, training programs, and care services; and

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2020, the United States Senators for Hawaii, Lieutenant Governor, and Harm Reduction Services Branch of the Department of Health issued "Hep Free 2030", a ten-year statewide strategy to help eliminate viral hepatitis types A, B, and C in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, the "Hep Free 2030" strategy emphasizes the need to integrate culturally appropriate services with a comprehensive system of care and promote the core values of harm reduction, social justice, intersectionality, and aloha; and

WHEREAS, continued coordination and ongoing efforts are needed to further implement the statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis types A, B, and C in Hawaii; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-second Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023, that this body recognizes and supports ongoing collaborative efforts by state agencies and private organizations to implement the "Hep Free 2030" statewide strategy to eliminate viral hepatitis types A, B, and C in Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the elimination of viral hepatitis be a public health priority for the State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Homelessness and Senate Standing Committee on Health and Human Services convene a joint informational briefing after the completion of the Regular Session of 2023 and before the commencement of the Regular Session of 2024 to assess the progress and status of the "Hep Free 2030" statewide strategy implementation and to determine any recommended legislative action; and



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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
2 Resolution be transmitted to Hawaii's Congressional Delegation,  
3 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Director of Health, Branch Chief  
4 of the Harm Reduction Services Branch of the Department of  
5 Health, and Co-Directors of Hep Free Hawaii.

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OFFERED BY: Allen A. Salotti

MAR 10 2023

