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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. _____

Recognizing July 28, 2026, as “World Hepatitis Day”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Recognizing July 28, 2026, as “World Hepatitis Day”.

Whereas hepatitis B and hepatitis C, and the incidence of liver disease caused by these viruses, have become urgent problems of a global proportion;

Whereas hepatitis B and hepatitis C remain the world’s leading causes of primary liver cancer despite effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B, and a cure for hepatitis C;

Whereas the World Health Organization has stated that progress toward eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat in 2030 has stalled;

Whereas an estimated 1,340,000 people worldwide die each year due to hepatitis;

Whereas an estimated 240,000,000 people worldwide live with chronic hepatitis B, and an estimated 1,100,000 people worldwide die each year due to a liver-related illness caused by hepatitis B;

Whereas an estimated 50,000,000 people worldwide are chronically infected with hepatitis C, and an estimated 221,000 people worldwide die each year due to a liver-related illness caused by hepatitis C;

Whereas, in the United States, up to an estimated—

(1) 2,400,000 are chronically infected with hepatitis B; and

(2) 3,500,000 people are chronically infected with hepatitis C;

Whereas the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that there were 39,687 newly reported acute hepatitis B infections and 48,921 newly reported acute hepatitis C infections, respectively, in the United States between 2011 and 2024;

Whereas chronic viral hepatitis claims thousands of lives each year in the United States, with an estimated 10,283 deaths due to hepatitis C in the United States in 2024;

Whereas up to an estimated 80 percent of people with acute hepatitis C do not have any symptoms;

Whereas available data suggests that more than 70 percent of new hepatitis C infections and 36 percent of new hepatitis B infections are among people who inject drugs;

Whereas African Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Latinos, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, gay and bisexual men, and persons who inject drugs intravenously all have higher rates of chronic viral hepatitis infections in the United States than other groups of people;

Whereas Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders bear the greatest burden of hepatitis B-related deaths in the United States;

Whereas hepatitis C is 10 times more infectious than human immunodeficiency virus (HIV);

Whereas hepatitis B is 50 to 100 times more infectious than HIV;

Whereas an estimated 33 percent of people who live in the United States and are infected with HIV are also infected with hepatitis B or C;

Whereas life expectancies for persons infected with HIV have increased with antiretroviral treatment, and liver disease, much of which is related to hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections, has become the most common cause of death among this population that is not related to acquired immune deficiency syndrome;

Whereas, despite the fact that chronic viral hepatitis is the most common blood-borne infection in the United States, over half of people living with hepatitis B and hepatitis C are unaware of their infection;

Whereas the hepatitis B vaccine is highly effective, and the longstanding universal birth dose and childhood hepatitis B recommendations have helped to successfully reduce childhood hepatitis B infections by more than 99 percent in the United States;

Whereas hepatitis C is curable through antiviral treatment but less than a third of people living with hepatitis C receive treatment;

Whereas both hepatitis B and hepatitis C are preventable with proper public health interventions, including pro-

grams that offer access to sterile injection equipment for people who inject drugs intravenously;

Whereas Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the CDC now recommend that all adults aged 19 to 59 be vaccinated, and all adults aged 18 and older be screened, for hepatitis B, shifting clinical guidelines from a risk-based to a universal standard and recognizing that previous hepatitis B interventions focusing only on at-risk individuals were insufficient;

Whereas health department hepatitis services have been significantly reduced, community-based organizations have had to reduce operations, severely reducing hepatitis B and C testing, hepatitis B vaccination, and community outreach, and persons living with hepatitis B or C have faced increased challenges in accessing medical care and treatment due to delayed appointments and deprioritization of routine hepatitis or primary care services; and

Whereas the goals of “World Hepatitis Day” on July 28, 2026, are to—

(1) highlight the global nature of chronic viral hepatitis epidemics;

(2) recognize that hepatitis can be prevented and eliminated in part through a comprehensive public education and awareness campaign designed to identify those at risk for, and living with, hepatitis;

(3) inform patients about new treatments that are available for hepatitis; and

(4) help increase the length and quality of life for people diagnosed with chronic hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

- 1 (1) recognizes “World Hepatitis Day”;
- 2 (2) supports broad access to hepatitis B and
- 3 hepatitis C vaccination and treatments;
- 4 (3) supports raising awareness of the risks and
- 5 consequences of undiagnosed chronic hepatitis B and
- 6 hepatitis C infections;
- 7 (4) calls for a robust governmental and public
- 8 health response to protect the health of the approxi-
- 9 mately 5,900,000 people in the United States; and
- 10 (5) urges the Centers for Disease Control and
- 11 Prevention to partner with State and local health de-
- 12 partments to develop strategies to increase the rate
- 13 of hepatitis B adult vaccination and hepatitis C
- 14 treatment to the levels necessary to eliminate new
- 15 infections in the United States.