

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003**

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**HOUSE RESOLUTION 1332  
Committee Substitute Favorable 7/16/03**

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Sponsors:

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Referred to:

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June 18, 2003

1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES TO  
2 ADDRESS ISSUES RELATING TO THE HEPATITIS C VIRUS.

3  
4           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus infection is the most common chronic bloodborne  
5 viral infection in the United States; and

6           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus infection is a life-threatening disease that the  
7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conservatively estimate infects 3.9 million  
8 persons in the United States; and

9           Whereas, there were approximately 41,000 newly infected Hepatitis C virus  
10 patients in 1998 and approximately 25,000 newly infected patients in 2001; and

11           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus infections account for approximately 8,000 to  
12 10,000 deaths each year in the United States because of Hepatitis C virus associated  
13 chronic liver disease; and

14           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus infection is three to four times more prevalent in  
15 the United States than HIV/AIDS, and approximately one-quarter of all HIV-infected  
16 persons are coinfecting with Hepatitis C virus; and

17           Whereas, an estimated 69 percent of Hepatitis C virus-infected persons are  
18 chronically infected; and

19           Whereas, approximately 75 percent to 85 percent of persons with acute  
20 infection from Hepatitis C virus will develop chronic infection; and

21           Whereas, infected individuals serve as a source of transmission to others; and

22           Whereas, very few of those infected with Hepatitis C virus are aware that  
23 they are infected, as an estimated 80 percent of persons have no signs or symptoms; and

24           Whereas, infected individuals who are unaware that they are infected are  
25 unlikely to take precautions to prevent the spread or exacerbation of their infection; and

26           Whereas, no vaccine is available for Hepatitis C virus, but treatments are  
27 available to slow the progression of the infection; and

28           Whereas, alcohol consumption is an important contributing factor in the  
29 progression of chronic liver disease among persons with Hepatitis C virus infections;  
30 and

1           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus is now the leading cause of liver disease, placing  
2 infected individuals at elevated risk for chronic liver disease, liver cancer, and other  
3 Hepatitis C virus-related diseases, such as Type II diabetes, autoimmune diseases, and  
4 other life-threatening conditions that can lead to liver failure; and

5           Whereas, data suggests that 15 percent to 20 percent of people with Hepatitis  
6 C virus will develop cirrhosis of the liver within five years of contracting the virus, and  
7 up to 25 percent may develop cirrhosis in 10 to 20 years; and

8           Whereas, Hepatitis C virus is the cause for one-third of liver transplants,  
9 which cost approximately \$280,000 each; and

10          Whereas, annually, the costs associated with liver transplants for Hepatitis C  
11 virus are nearly \$300,000,000; and

12          Whereas, conservative estimates now place the cost of lost productivity and  
13 medical care arising from Hepatitis C virus infection in the United States to be in excess  
14 of \$600,000,000 annually, and such cost will undoubtedly increase without education  
15 and prevention efforts; Now, therefore,

16 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

17          **SECTION 1.** The House of Representatives urges local health departments  
18 and other State agencies and institutions to work collaboratively to address the national  
19 health crisis associated with Hepatitis C virus through the following measures:

- 20           (1) Recommending implementation of prevention and education activities  
21           by State and local public health programs to counsel and screen  
22           persons at risk for Hepatitis C virus infection.
- 23           (2) Recommending the monitoring and evaluation of the infection rate of  
24           Hepatitis C virus.
- 25           (3) Recommending that publicly funded programs ensure that Hepatitis C  
26           virus-related treatments are made available to persons of all ages.
- 27           (4) Recommending implementation of outreach and community-based  
28           programs to educate health care professionals concerning diagnosis,  
29           medical management, and prevention by relying upon information  
30           recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

31          **SECTION 2.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.