

2015-J137

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to declare May 2015 as Hepatitis Awareness Month in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official months that are set aside to increase awareness of serious issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to declare May 2015 as Hepatitis Awareness Month in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of National Hepatitis Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis is a public health threat, known to be caused by many viruses; this disease causes inflammation of the liver; and

WHEREAS, There are three main types of hepatitis, A, B, and C; their effects range from not usually serious (A) to serious (C); in addition, rarer forms of hepatitis include hepatitis D, E, and autoimmune hepatitis; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, one in 20 people will have been exposed to hepatitis B; more likely than not, someone you know will have hepatitis B even though they may display no obvious symptoms; and

WHEREAS, There is a lot of stigma associated with hepatitis B; the hepatitis virus attacks the liver causing damage which can result in liver cancer; hepatitis B accounts for about 80% of liver cancer cases; and

WHEREAS, Chronic viral hepatitis due to hepatitis C has been a disease that has little or no public awareness due to its nature as being largely asymptomatic until irreversible liver damage has occurred; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C currently infects nearly four million Americans, including an estimated 158,000 New Yorkers, and there are about 30,000

new cases and approximately 10,000 deaths each year in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The consequences of hepatitis C cost approximately \$7.5 million per 100,000 people; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is largely not reported and the public is uninformed about the virus; and

WHEREAS, In the absence of a vaccine for hepatitis C, emphasis must be placed on other means of disease prevention, including education of health care workers, emergency services workers, veterans and the general public; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C has been characterized by the World Health Organization as a disease of primary concern to humanity; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater public awareness of this serious health issue, and more must be done to increase activity at the State, local and national levels to support the patients as well as their families; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to declare May 2015 as Hepatitis Awareness Month in the State of New York, and to urge the citizens of this great Empire State to learn about the causes, symptoms, diagnoses and treatments for hepatitis; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York.