

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 204

Supporting the goals and ideals of “National STD Awareness Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 5, 2011

Ms. LEE of California submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of “National STD Awareness Month”.

Whereas sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (also known as sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs) are a major public health challenge that pose a significant burden in the United States both in economic and human terms;

Whereas the United States has the highest rate of STIs in the industrialized world, with an estimated 19,000,000 new cases occurring each year, and almost half of those infections occurring in young people between the ages of 15 to 24;

Whereas all people in the United States have an interest in STIs because every community is impacted and everyone pays for the cost of these infections, either directly or indirectly;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), STIs impose a tremendous economic burden on the United States, costing the healthcare system \$16,400,000,000 per year;

Whereas, in 2008, the CDC estimated that 1 in 4 young women between the ages of 14 and 19 in the United States, or 3,200,000 teenage girls, and nearly 1 in 2 African-American young women are infected with at least one of the most common sexually transmitted infections, which are human papillomavirus (HPV), chlamydia, herpes simplex virus, and trichomoniasis;

Whereas in 2010, CDC data indicated that 1 in 6 Americans between the ages of 14 and 49 years old were infected with the Herpes Simplex virus Type 2, a lifelong and incurable infection, and that African-American women 14–49 years old were the most affected group, with a prevalence rate of 48 percent;

Whereas poverty and lack of access to quality health care exacerbate the rate of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other STIs;

Whereas men who have sex with men (MSM) continue to be disproportionately impacted by STIs, accounting for 62 percent of all syphilis cases in 2009 as compared to only 4 percent of such cases in 2000;

Whereas racial disparities in rates of STIs are among the worst health disparities in the Nation for any health condition;

Whereas most STIs have been associated with increased risk of HIV transmission and are likely contributing to the ongoing HIV epidemic in the United States;

Whereas the CDC also reports that the two most common STIs among young women are HPV, with 18 percent infected, and chlamydia, with 4 percent infected;

Whereas the long-term health effects of these STIs are especially severe for women and include infertility and cervical cancer;

Whereas vaccination, screening, and early treatment can prevent some of the most devastating effects of STIs;

Whereas high STI infection rates in the United States demonstrate the need for better ways to reach those most at risk of infection;

Whereas the CDC recommends annual chlamydia screenings for sexually active women 25 years of age and younger;

Whereas the CDC also recommends HPV vaccination for girls and women between the ages of 11 and 26 who have not been vaccinated, or who have not completed the full series of shots;

Whereas the CDC recommends screening for HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea at least once a year for MSM who are not in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship;

Whereas chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, chronic pelvic pain, infertility, and tubular pregnancies, which can affect a woman's health and well-being throughout her lifetime;

Whereas STIs can be transmitted from infected mothers to infants during childbirth and can cause severe health consequences in these infants;

Whereas STIs often cause social stigma and may have a serious psychological impact among those who are infected;

Whereas programs that provide comprehensive and medically accurate health information and screening and treatment services can help people protect themselves against STIs, including through a variety of Federal programs such as Title X of the Public Health Service Act and the CDC’s STD prevention program;

Whereas school-based STI screening programs have been highly successful where implemented and are effective at preventing the spread of STIs among adolescents;

Whereas the sexual and reproductive health needs of men must be more thoroughly recognized and better addressed by the public health and medical provider community in order to more effectively combat the spread of STIs;

Whereas STD programs in State and local health departments that are funded through the CDC’s Division of STD Prevention are the Nation’s frontline defense against the spread of STIs;

Whereas STI screening, vaccination, and other prevention strategies for sexually active women should be among the highest public health priorities; and

Whereas the CDC observes April as “National STD Awareness Month”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the goals and ideals of “National
3 STD Awareness Month”;

4 (2) encourages the Federal Government, States,
5 localities, and nonprofit organizations to observe the
6 month with appropriate programs and activities,
7 with the goal of increasing public knowledge of the

1 risks of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and
2 protecting people of all ages;

3 (3) recognizes the human toll of STIs and the
4 importance of making the prevention, diagnosis, and
5 treatment of STIs an urgent public health priority;
6 and

7 (4) calls on all people in the United States to
8 learn about STIs and the prevention approaches rec-
9 ommended for them and encourages all sexually ac-
10 tive individuals to get tested for STIs and to seek
11 appropriate care if they are infected.

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