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SENATE MEMORIAL 10

43RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1997

INTRODUCED BY

ROMAN M. MAES III

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE MONTH OF JUNE BE DESIGNATED AS HEPATITIS  
AWARENESS MONTH AND URGING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION ABOUT THE VIRUS DURING  
HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH.

WHEREAS, chronic viral hepatitis currently infects four  
million five hundred thousand Americans; and

WHEREAS, the national institute of health has determined  
chronic viral hepatitis to be a major public health issue, and  
it will be conducting a consensus conference addressing the  
detection and treatment of the hepatitis C virus; and

WHEREAS, there are one hundred fifty thousand new cases of  
chronic viral hepatitis each year in the United States despite  
the fact that the virus is largely unreported and  
underdiagnosed; and

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1           WHEREAS, the hepatitis C virus is the cause of eight  
2 thousand to ten thousand preventable deaths per year in the  
3 United States; and

4           WHEREAS, consequences of the hepatitis C virus cost about  
5 seven million three hundred thousand dollars (\$7,300,000) per  
6 one hundred thousand patients because individuals infected with  
7 the virus remain largely asymptomatic until the virus causes  
8 irreversible liver damage; and

9           WHEREAS, eighty-five percent of all Americans infected with  
10 the hepatitis C virus become chronically infected and develop  
11 cirrhosis and liver cancer; and

12           WHEREAS, the American liver foundation estimates that in  
13 the 1980s blood transfusions caused transmission of the human  
14 immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis C viruses, with an  
15 estimated three hundred thousand people infected with the  
16 hepatitis C virus alone because of the lack of adequate  
17 screening of the blood supply prior to 1990; and

18           WHEREAS, risk factors for the hepatitis C virus include  
19 popular practices such as body piercing and tattooing, and other  
20 means of blood transmission, including health care workers who  
21 are exposed to needle sticks, and intravenous drug users, but in  
22 more than forty percent of infected patients, it is unknown how  
23 the virus occurred; and

24           WHEREAS, there is a food and drug administration-approved  
25 treatment for the hepatitis C virus; and



1 FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
2 FIRST SESSION, 1997  
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5 March 12, 1997  
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7 Mr. President:  
8

9 Your CORPORATIONS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE, to  
10 whom has been referred  
11

12 SENATE MEMORIAL 10  
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14 has had it under consideration and reports same with  
15 recommendation that it DO PASS.  
16

17 Respectfully submitted,  
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19 \_\_\_\_\_  
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22 Roman M. Maes, III, Chairman  
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Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ Not Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

(Chief Clerk)

(Chief Clerk)

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

The roll call vote was 8 For 0 Against

Yes: 8

No: 0

Excused: Fidel, Robinson

Absent: None

SMD10CT1

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