

SENATE, No. 1858

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
216th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 24, 2014

Sponsored by:

Senator RICHARD J. CODEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

SYNOPSIS

Requires hepatitis B to be considered a priority under “Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



S1858 CODEY

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1 AN ACT concerning hepatitis B and amending P.L.2004, c.137.

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3 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
4 of New Jersey:

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6 1. Section 1 of P.L.2004, c.137 (C.26:2-167.1) is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 1. The Commissioner of Health shall establish the “Eliminating
9 Health Disparities Initiative” in the Office on Minority and
10 Multicultural Health. The commissioner shall require the office to
11 develop and implement a comprehensive, coordinated plan to
12 reduce health disparities between White and racial and ethnic
13 minority populations in the State in the following priority areas:
14 asthma; infant mortality; breast, cervical, prostate and colorectal
15 cancer screening; kidney disease; HIV/AIDS; hepatitis B; hepatitis
16 C; sexually transmitted diseases; adult and child immunizations;
17 cardiovascular disease; diabetes; and accidental injuries and
18 violence. As used in this act, "office" means the New Jersey Office
19 on Minority and Multicultural Health.
20 (cf: P.L.2012, c.17, s.126)

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22 2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the second month
23 next following the date of enactment.

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STATEMENT

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28 This bill requires that the New Jersey Office on Minority and
29 Multicultural Health (OMMH) in the Department of Health include
30 hepatitis B as a priority condition under the “Eliminating Health
31 Disparities Initiative.” The initiative requires that the OMMH
32 develop and implement a comprehensive, coordinated plan to
33 reduce health disparities between white and racial and ethnic
34 minority populations in the State. The statute that required the
35 establishment of the “Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative”
36 lists the medical conditions to be considered priorities, and this bill
37 amends the law to include hepatitis B on that list.

38 According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and
39 Prevention (CDC), Asians from certain regions around the world
40 who are living in the United States, including individuals from the
41 Far East and Southeast Asia, make up less than five percent of the
42 total United States population, yet account for more than half of
43 those living with chronic hepatitis B in the United States.
44 Consequently, the CDC considers chronic hepatitis B and
45 associated liver cancer to be among the most serious health

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 disparities. Many individuals in this high-risk population are not
2 tested for hepatitis B and are unaware that they are infected, and
3 many recent immigrants lack access to medical services that can
4 help save their lives. New Jersey is home to more than 375,000
5 individuals at high risk of contracting hepatitis B, including
6 individuals of Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese
7 descent. Blood screenings of Korean American adults at one
8 hospital in Bergen County in 2010 revealed that 42 percent of those
9 screened were susceptible to the Hepatitis B virus.