

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 542

Designating April 2008 as “National STD Awareness Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2008

Mr. REID (for Mrs. CLINTON) (for herself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Mr. LAUTENBERG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating April 2008 as “National STD Awareness Month”.

Whereas sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) pose a significant burden in the United States both in economic and human terms;

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

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), STDs impose a tremendous economic burden on the United States, with direct medical costs as high as \$15,300,000,000 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, is infected with at least 1 of the most common STDs, which are human papillomavirus (HPV), chlamydia, herpes simplex virus, and trichomoniasis;

Whereas poverty and lack of access to quality health care exacerbate the rate of infection with HIV and other STDs;

Whereas the CDC reports that 48 percent of young African-American women are infected with an STD, compared to 20 percent of young Caucasian women;

Whereas the CDC also reports that the 2 most common STDs among young women are HPV, with 18 percent infected, and chlamydia, with 4 percent infected;

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

Whereas HPV vaccination and the screening and early treatment of STDs can prevent some of the most devastating effects of untreated STDs;

Whereas the high STD infection rate among young women in the United States demonstrates the need to develop ways to reach those young women most at risk of infection;

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

Whereas the CDC also recommends that 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, be fully vaccinated against HPV;

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

Whereas the harmful impact of STDs on infants leads to long-term emotional suffering and stress for families;

Whereas, unlike other diseases, STDs often cause stigma and feelings of shame for patients diagnosed with those diseases;

Whereas the Federal Government should help people protect themselves against STDs by supplying them with information about their options and funding screening and treatment services through a variety of programs, including programs under title X of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300 et seq.) and the CDC's STD prevention program; and

Whereas STD screening, vaccination, and other prevention strategies for sexually active women should be among our highest public health priorities: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates April 2008 as “National STD
3 Awareness Month”;

4 (2) requests 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
8 risks of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and
9 protecting people of all ages;

1 (3) recognizes the human toll of the STD epi-
2 demic and makes the prevention and cure of STDs
3 a higher public health priority; and

4 (4) calls on all people in the United States to
5 learn what screenings are recommended for them
6 and their families and to seek appropriate care.

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