

WASHINGTON, DC – Efforts by Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA), Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), to increase awareness of Hepatitis B received Congressional endorsement today when the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed Honda's Resolution recognizing the goals and ideals of May 9-16 "National Hepatitis B Awareness Week."

"This Resolution is an important step in increasing education and awareness about the very serious threat posed by Hepatitis B," Congressman Honda said. "We must act with a sense of urgency to raise the visibility of this under-diagnosed disease."

Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA) partnered with Congressman Honda to sponsor of H.Res. 250, which recognizes Hepatitis B as the world's most serious liver infection,

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1.25 million Americans are infected with Hepatitis B infection. More than 6,000 Americans die annually from Hepatitis B and Hepatitis B-related liver complications, including liver damage (cirrhosis) and liver cancer.

As Chair of CAPAC, Honda noted that Hepatitis B poses a particular threat for Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI), who account for more than half of the chronic Hepatitis B cases and half of the deaths from this life-threatening disease.

"Liver cancer rates among males are 13 times higher in Vietnamese Americans, 8 times higher in Korean Americans, and 6 times higher in Chinese Americans," Honda said. "Up to 20,000 women in the United State who gave birth each year are chronically infected with the Hepatitis B virus, 54 percent of whom are AAPIs."

Despite these infection rates, Honda noted that there are currently no federal program or recommendations for routine Hepatitis B screening in the high-risk AAPI community. Additionally, there is no funding budgeted specifically for liver cancer prevention and research.

“There’s a real need for increased awareness and education in the AAPI community,” said Jeffrey Caballero, Executive Director of the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations. “More than half of the deaths from Hepatitis B are from this community, yet the seriousness of this disease is underappreciated, underdiagnosed, and undertreated.”

Community health advocates and policymakers around the country will be convening events to raise awareness on Hepatitis B. Several of the currently known Hepatitis B Awareness Week Activities include:

Philadelphia “Countdown to a Healthy Liver” Patient Roundtable

Date: Tuesday, May 10

Panel discussion: 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn’s Landing, 200 S. Columbus Blvd.

Contact: Molli Conti, Vice President of Outreach Programs, Hepatitis B Foundation:
215.489.4900

Caroline Pavis, Golin Harris: 312.729.4179

New York City Local Media Event

Date: Wednesday, May 11

9 to 10:30 a.m.

Location: Millennium Hotel, 55 Church St., New York

Contact: Molli Conti, Vice President of Outreach Programs, Hepatitis B Foundation:
215.489.4900

Caroline Pavis, Golin Harris: 312.729.4179

San Jose “Countdown to a Healthy Liver” Patient Roundtable

Date: Thursday, May 12

Panel discussion: 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Hilton San Jose & Towers, 300 Alameda Blvd., San Jose, CA

Contact: Molli Conti, Vice President of Outreach Programs, Hepatitis B Foundation:

215.489.4900

Caroline Pavis, Golin Harris: 312.729.4179

San Francisco Local Media Event

Date: Friday, May 13

9 to 10:30 a.m.

Location: W Hotel San Francisco, 181 Third Street, San Francisco, CA

Contact: Molli Conti, Vice President of Outreach Programs, Hepatitis B Foundation:

215.489.4900

Caroline Pavis, Golin Harris: 312.729.4179

Chicago Local Media Event

Contact: Molli Conti, Vice President of Outreach Programs, Hepatitis B Foundation:

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The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) is a bicameral and bipartisan caucus of Members of Congress of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and Members who have a strong dedication to promoting the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Founded in 1994 by then Congressman Norman Mineta, and currently chaired by Congressman Michael Honda, CAPAC has been addressing the needs of the AAPI community in all areas of American life. For more information on CAPAC, please call (202) 225-2631 or visit <http://www.honda.house.gov/capac> .