SLS 18RS-4452 ORIGINAL

2018 Regular Session

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 123

BY SENATOR BOUDREAUX

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH. Designates June 11-15, 2018, as Meningitis B Awareness Week.

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To designate June 11-15, 2018, as Meningitis B Awareness Week.
3	WHEREAS, meningococcal disease, more commonly referred to as bacterial
4	meningitis, is any infection caused by the bacterium Neisseria meningitidis; and
5	WHEREAS, meningococcal disease is uncommon; however, when it strikes, its
6	flu-like symptoms make diagnosis difficult; and
7	WHEREAS, meningococcal disease can cause serious illness such as infection of the
8	lining of the brain and spinal column (meningitis) or blood infections (sepsis); the disease
9	strikes quickly and can lead to severe or permanent disabilities, such as hearing loss, brain
10	damage, seizures, limb amputation, and can even lead to death within 24 to 48 hours; and
11	WHEREAS, although one in ten people are carriers for this bacteria with no signs
12	or symptoms of disease, sometimes Neisseria meningitidis bacteria can cause illness; and
13	WHEREAS, there are different strains of bacterial meningitis, including serogroups
14	A, C, W, Y, and B, and vaccines exist to help provide protection against all the serogroups
15	commonly seen in the United States; and
16	WHEREAS, the single best way to help prevent all common strains of
17	meningococcal disease is to be vaccinated with both a MenACWY vaccine and a separate
18	MenB vaccine; and

1	WHEREAS, Meningococcal disease is spread from person to person via the
2	exchange of the bacteria through respiratory and throat secretions during close or lengthy
3	contact, such as sharing beverages or eating utensils, kissing, or spending time in close
4	contact with someone who is sick or who carries the bacteria; and
5	WHEREAS, community settings in which large groups of people gather, like college
6	campuses, can increase the risk of the spread of meningococcal disease; and
7	WHEREAS, because of the way meningitis is spread, through close personal contact,
8	and that the social behavior of young adults ages 17-22 increases their risk of contracting the
9	disease, students in dormitory settings and crowded events are particularly vulnerable to
10	meningococcal disease; and
11	WHEREAS, while vaccines for serogroups A, C, W, and Y have been available for
12	many years, prior to 2014, there were no vaccines available for serogroup B; and
13	WHEREAS, despite the existence of a serogroup B vaccine, there have been several
14	recent outbreaks of serogroup B meningococcal disease on college campuses throughout the
15	United States, with some cases resulting in death; and
16	WHEREAS, because the B strain of meningitis requires a new, separate vaccination,
17	students heading to college may mistakenly think that if they received the A, C, W, and Y
18	vaccine that they are protected against all strains and may not realize they are not protected
19	against the B strain; and
20	WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control, Neisseria meningitidis
21	serogroup B accounts for approximately half of all meningococcal cases among persons aged
22	17-22 years in the United States; and
23	WHEREAS, vaccination for serogroups A, C, W and Y is routinely recommended
24	by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and
25	WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee
26	on Immunization Practices recommends that decisions to vaccinate adolescents and young
27	adults 16 through 23 years of age against serogroup B meningococcal disease should be
28	made at the individual level with healthcare providers; and
29	WHEREAS, R.S. 17:170 requires each person entering any school in Louisiana for
30	the first time and each child entering the sixth grade to be vaccinated against certain

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1	$vaccine-preventable\ diseases\ including\ meningococcal\ disease\ (serogroups\ A,C,W, and\ Y);$
2	and
3	WHEREAS, R.S. 17:170.2 requires each school board to provide information to
4	parents and students relative to the risks associated with meningococcal disease and the
5	availability, effectiveness, and known contraindications of immunization against the disease;
6	and
7	WHEREAS, since 2006, R.S. 17:170.1 has required persons in Louisiana to provide
8	satisfactory evidence of current immunization against meningococcal disease (serogroups
9	A, C, W, and Y) as a condition of registration in courses at a public or nonpublic
10	postsecondary education institution and requires those institutions to provide detailed
11	information on the risks associated with the disease; and
12	WHEREAS, meningitis vaccines are covered by public and private insurance plans,
13	and individuals are encouraged to contact their health insurance provider to determine
14	coverage of MenACWY and MenB vaccines; and
15	WHEREAS, students, parents, educators, and healthcare providers need to know
16	about all strains of meningitis and how to protect against them; and
17	WHEREAS, June is a time when students are preparing to go to college and can
18	discuss how to become fully vaccinated with their healthcare provider.
19	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
20	designate June 11-15, 2018 as Meningitis B Awareness Week.
21	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted
22	to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.
	The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jerry J. Guillot.

Designates June 11-15, 2018, as Meningitis B Awareness Week.

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**DIGEST** 

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Boudreaux