

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 54

Whereas, meningococcal disease is any infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, or meningococcus. Although one in ten people are carriers for this bacteria with no signs or symptoms of disease, sometimes *Neisseria meningitidis* bacteria can cause illness; and

Whereas, meningococcal disease is spread from person to person through the exchange of bacteria through respiratory and throat secretion during close or lengthy contact; and

Whereas, in the United States, there are approximately 1,000 to 1,200 cases of meningococcal disease that occur each year; and

Whereas, ten to fifteen percent of infected individuals will die, while eleven to nineteen percent of those who live will suffer from serious morbidity, including loss of limbs and impacts to the nervous system; and

Whereas, infants under one year of age, as well as young adults between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one, are most commonly impacted by this disease; and

Whereas, there are different strains or serogroups of *Neisseria meningitidis*, with serogroups B, C, and Y accounting for most meningococcal disease in the United States; and

Whereas, there have been several recent outbreaks of serogroup B meningococcal disease on college campuses, with some cases resulting in death; and

Whereas, vaccines are available to prevent meningococcal disease, and different vaccines provide coverage against certain specific serogroups of the disease; and

Whereas, while there are vaccines that help provide protection against all three serogroups (B, C, and Y) commonly seen in the United States, only vaccination for serogroups A, C, W, and Y is routinely recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

Whereas, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that decisions to vaccinate adolescents and young adults sixteen through twenty-three years of age against serogroup B meningococcal disease should be made at the individual level with health care providers; and

Whereas, it is critical that students, parents, educators, and health care providers understand the dangers of meningitis B and are aware that a vaccine is available to prevent disease resulting from this

serogroup:

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Eighth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, urge the Missouri Department of Higher Education and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to encourage all public and private high schools, colleges, and universities in Missouri to provide to all students, parents, and guardians about meningococcal disease information explaining the different disease serogroups, symptoms, risks, and treatment options; and

Be It Further Resolved that such information should also include a notice of availability, benefits, risks, and limitations of all meningococcal vaccines receiving a recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, including Category A and Category B recommendations, with specific information as to those persons at higher risk for the disease; and

Be It Further Resolved that each public and private high school, college, and university in Missouri is urged to recommend that current and entering students receive meningococcal vaccines in accordance with current Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices guidelines; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Director of the Missouri Department of Higher Education and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.