



Oct 2010 Hepatitis & Liver Cancer Action Alert

October 2010

Members of Congress and Senators return home in this month to campaign for the November elections. This is an opportunity for hepatitis advocates to meet their legislators and raise awareness about hepatitis and liver cancer in large and small forums across the country. Below are a few key talking points that you can use when you meet them or have the chance to speak briefly at a larger meeting.

Hepatitis Advocacy Sound Bites- Use these when you meet legislators in passing or have a minute to present in a larger townhall or public meeting.

Hepatitis C virus affects 4 times more people than HIV. Hepatitis B virus affects 2 times as many people in the U.S. However, there are few programs that educate people about the need to be tested and vaccinated.

Hepatitis B, hepatitis C and liver cancer are preventable if we dedicate resources to vaccination and prevention programs.

Liver cancer, mainly caused by chronic hepatitis B and C infection, is the only type of cancer on the rise in the U.S. and is one of the most lethal types of cancer.

There is no federal funding to provide core public health services for viral hepatitis such as hepatitis B and C counseling and testing.

Sixty-five to seventy-five percent of chronically infected people are not aware that they have hepatitis B or C and access to testing is critically needed.

The new Institute of Medicine report, "Viral Hepatitis and Liver Cancer" recommends increased resources and program expansion to improve hepatitis prevention and care in the US.

ASK- In the brief time you have please consider asking for:

- **Support for hepatitis and liver cancer prevention funding**
- **Please co-sponsor the Viral Hepatitis & Liver Cancer Control and Prevention Act**

Background- HR 3974/S 3711 Viral Hepatitis & Liver Cancer Control and Prevention Act

This bill amends the Public Health Service Act to increase hepatitis prevention and control activities. It affects people at risk for and chronically infected with hepatitis B and C by increasing:

- education for patients and health care providers,
- access to hepatitis testing and liver cancer screening,
- the ability of health departments to detect outbreaks, and
- supporting viral hepatitis prevention and education programs across the U.S..