



HR0152

LRB096 11798 KXB 22610 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Although it is relatively uncommon in the United States, accounting for about 1% of total diagnosed cancers, the incidence of esophageal cancer has been increasing; and

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WHEREAS, One factor contributing to this trend is greater prevalence of obesity, which increases the risk of one form of esophageal cancer known as adenocarcinoma; according to the American Cancer Society's estimates, in 2008 there were 16,470 new cases of esophageal cancer causing 14,280 deaths; the five-year relative survival rate for localized stage esophageal cancer is 34%, and the five-year survival rate for all stages combined is only 16%; and

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WHEREAS, Symptoms of esophageal cancer generally do not appear until the disease has advanced; this fact illustrates the importance of educating the public about the various risk factors for this disease; early detection and proper diagnosis are also critical in order to treat esophageal cancer effectively; new ways to detect changes in genes may lead to the development of more accurate screening tests to find esophageal cancer at an earlier, more curable stage; and

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WHEREAS, It is hoped that understanding these changes will lead to gene therapies for preventing or treating esophageal

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1 cancer; avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol use can
2 substantially reduce the risk of developing esophageal cancer;
3 men have esophageal cancer at rates about three times greater
4 than women do, primarily due to men's greater use of tobacco
5 and alcohol; in addition, the risk of dying from this cancer is
6 increased by approximately 50% in obese men; and

7 WHEREAS, People between the ages of 70 and 84 have the
8 greatest risk for cancer of the esophagus; nearly 80% of people
9 diagnosed are between the ages of 55 and 85; African Americans
10 are twice as likely as Caucasians to have cancer of the
11 esophagus; people with long-standing reflux or people with
12 Barrett esophagus, a condition associated with long-term
13 reflux of stomach acid into the esophagus, are at sharply
14 increased risk; and

15 WHEREAS, A diet that is low in fruits, vegetables, and
16 vitamins A, B2, and C increases the risk for esophageal cancer;
17 specific quality-of-life issues associated with esophageal
18 cancer include the inability to eat solid food, guilt
19 associated with a history of tobacco and alcohol use, and
20 end-of-life issues due to the low survival rate; and

21 WHEREAS, Cancer of the esophagus usually is diagnosed at a
22 late stage and therefore has a poor outlook for survival; this
23 kind of cancer can virtually be prevented by stopping, or never

1 starting, tobacco use and by moderating alcohol use; screening
2 endoscopy for people at high risk for this cancer can also
3 increase early detection rates; typically, the earlier cancer
4 is detected and diagnosed, the more successful the treatment,
5 thus enhancing the survival rate; therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
7 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
8 proclaim the month of May of 2009 be designated as Esophageal
9 Cancer Awareness Month in the State of Illinois; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That we declare that the Illinois government has
12 a responsibility:

13 (a) to raise awareness about the importance of screening
14 methods for, and treatment of, esophageal cancer;

15 (b) to increase research funding that is commensurate with
16 the burden of the disease so that the screening and treatment
17 of esophageal cancer may be improved, and so that the causes
18 of, and a cure for, prostate cancer may be discovered; and

19 (c) to continue to consider ways for improving access to,
20 and the quality of, health care services for detecting and
21 treating esophageal cancer; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Governor is requested to issue a
23 proclamation calling upon the public officials and the citizens

1 of Illinois to observe the month with appropriate activities
2 and programs annually; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 delivered to Governor Pat Quinn.