

This bill establishes a State Advisory Council on Hepatitis C to review a specified hepatitis C prevention plan. This legislation also specifies the terms of the Council and provides for its termination.

House Bill 386, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed by me, accomplishes the same purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to sign Senate Bill 519.

Sincerely,
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

Senate Bill No. 519

AN ACT concerning

Disease Prevention - Hepatitis C Advisory Council

FOR the purpose of establishing a State Advisory Council on Hepatitis C to ~~provide advice and recommendations to the General Assembly on public awareness, education, screening, and treatment related to hepatitis C~~ review, recommend changes to, and solicit funds to implement a certain hepatitis C prevention plan; specifying the membership, terms, removal, chairman, and purpose of the Advisory Council; requiring the Advisory Council to issue certain reports on or before certain dates; requiring the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to take certain actions in connection with the Hepatitis C Advisory Council; defining certain terms; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Hepatitis C Advisory Council.

BY adding to

Article - Health - General

Section 18-1001 through 18-1009, inclusive, to be under the new subtitle
"Subtitle 10. Hepatitis C Advisory Council"

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2000 Replacement Volume and 2002 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is a silent killer, being largely asymptomatic until irreversible liver damage may have occurred; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C has been characterized by the World Health Organization as a disease of primary concern to humanity; and

WHEREAS, Hepatitis C currently infects approximately 4.5 million persons in the United States, and each year there are some 30,000 new infections nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that approximately 12,000 persons die annually from the consequences of hepatitis C, and this number continues to grow each year; and