

HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS: Hepatitis C is the most common chronic blood-borne viral infection in the United States, and at least 3.9 to 4.5 million Americans have been infected with the Hepatitis C virus; and

WHEREAS: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 30,000 new cases of Hepatitis C infection occur annually in the United States. The CDC estimates that at least 10,000 Americans die each year of chronic Hepatitis C related disease and predicts a three-fold increase in the death rate by the year 2010; and

WHEREAS: No vaccine is available to prevent chronic Hepatitis C, but medications are available to clear the Hepatitis C virus from the body in up to half people treated. Persons infected with the Hepatitis C virus are often unaware of their status for as long as 10 to 20 years; and

WHEREAS: The CDC has stated that Hepatitis C is a disease of major public health importance and has recommended the implementation of risk-reduction counseling services; identification, counseling and testing of persons at risk; medical management of infected persons; professional and public education; and surveillance and research to monitor disease trends; and

WHEREAS: Hepatitis B and Hepatitis A affect thousands of people in the United States and may be eradicated through vaccination; now

THEREFORE: I, SONNY PERDUE, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim May, 2006, as HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 26th day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand six.