CalHEP
California Hepatitis Alliance

April 26, 2012

The Honorable Sam Blakeslee
State Capitol, Room 4070
Sacramento, CA 95814
FAX: 916-445-8081

Re: SCR 75 - Support

Dear Senator Blakeslee,

The undersigned organizations and individuals join the California Hepatitis Alliance (CalHEP) in strongly supporting SCR 75, which would declare the month of May, 2012, to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month in California. We thank you for your leadership in authoring this important resolution and for your commitment to fighting the state's viral hepatitis epidemic.

Public health experts estimate that more than 450,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis C and 280,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis B. However, the overwhelming majority do not know their status and many do not find out until they have advanced liver disease, liver failure, or liver cancer. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are the leading causes of primary cancer and liver transplantations. The cost of hospitalizations for hepatitis B and hepatitis C related liver cancer, liver disease, and liver transplantation exceeded $2 billion in California.

Campaigns such as Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month play a major role in educating the public about the need to be screened for hepatitis B and C and ways to prevent transmission, including vaccination against hepatitis B. They also help reduce stigma and encourage a strong public health response to a serious epidemic.

California has taken a leadership role in fighting viral hepatitis by developing its Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Strategic Plan. Passage of SCR 75 would further this effort and help ensure that we reduce the scope and consequences of the hepatitis B and C epidemics. Thank you again for your tireless work on our behalf.

Sincerely,
(signatures as of April 26, 2012)

Organizations:

AIDS Support Network, San Luis Obispo,
Berkeley Free Clinic
C.O.R.E. Medical Clinic, Sacramento
Drug Abuse Alternatives Center, Santa Rosa
Harm Reduction Coalition, Oakland

Harm Reduction Services, Sacramento
Hep C Meditations Project, San Francisco
Local Area Support For Hepatitis (LASH), Redding
Project Inform, San Francisco
San Francisco Hepatitis C Task Force
San Luis Obispo Hepatitis C Project
United for Drug Policy Reform, Oakland

Individuals:

Shirley Barger, San Francisco
Jay Blodgett, Fremont
Lynn Campanario, Santa Rosa
Brian DiCrocco, San Francisco,
Graciela Molina Enriquez Fix, Union City
Ryan Clary, San Francisco
Jonathan Garcia, Fremont
Pauli Gray, San Francisco
Tisa Hall, Hayward
Michelle Johnston, Sacramento
Ann Marie Keefer-Lynch, Yorba Linda
Edie Kahn, San Luis Obispo, CA
David Kilburn, Atascadero
Cynthia Lam, Santa Clara
Susan Leas Latham, San Francisco
Dominique Leslie, San Francisco
Charles Mac Donald, San Francisco
Diana Ngo, Belmont
Robin Roth, San Francisco
Hotaik Sung, San Jose