

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26

WHEREAS, it is well established that the most effective strategy for preventing influenza is annual vaccination against the illness; and

WHEREAS, beginning with the 2008-2009 flu season, annual vaccination of all children aged six months to 18 years is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP); and

WHEREAS, annual vaccination of all children aged six months through 18 years should begin as soon as a vaccine is available in the 2008-2009 flu season, but should be initiated no later than the 2009-2010 season; and

WHEREAS, strategies that focus on providing routine vaccination to persons at higher risk for flu complications have long been recommended, although rates of flu vaccination among the majority of these groups remains low; and

WHEREAS, although the flu is the most frequent cause of death for a vaccine-preventable disease in the United States, there were 87 reported pediatric deaths in this country caused by the flu during the 2007-2008 flu season, and it is responsible for an average of 200,000 hospitalizations each year and an estimated 36,000 deaths, primarily in the elderly; and

WHEREAS, according to the AAP, the ACIP's expanded recommendations target all school-age children, the population that bears the greatest burden of disease and is at higher risk of needing flu-related medical care compared with healthy adults, and the AAP states that reducing flu transmission among school-age children will in turn reduce transmission of the flu to household contacts and community members; and

WHEREAS, flu vaccine should be offered to all children as soon as a vaccine becomes available before the start of the season and should continue into March and beyond, as there is often more than one peak in flu illness during the same season, so the AAP states that vaccination through May 1 can provide protection and widen the window of opportunity for children who need two doses of vaccine to receive it; and

WHEREAS, school-based vaccination is an efficient venue for the mass vaccination of school-age children against the flu, and school-based vaccination programs benefit the communities in which they are conducted by helping reduce transmission of the flu to other members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the potential threat of a flu pandemic underscores the benefit of building out local infrastructure and strengthening community partnerships as a preventive measure to address both seasonal flu and the event of pandemic:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-fifth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby recognize and declare that extending the flu vaccination season both earlier and later may help vaccinate, and therefore protect, children, adults and especially those in high risk groups, and it is important during this flu season that all Missourians are protected against this dangerous and potentially deadly disease; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to send properly inscribed copies of this resolution to the Department of Health and Senior Services and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.