

THE CURE HEPATITIS C ACT (S. 1941)

This bipartisan legislation implements a nationwide elimination program for the hepatitis C virus (HCV) in the United States by prioritizing patient health and safety, advancing a national plan to eliminate hepatitis C, and ending this health crisis through screening, diagnosis, and treatment.

What is HCV?

Hepatitis C is a viral infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV) and spread through blood-to-blood exposure. The majority of people exposed to HCV develop a chronic infection, which can cause cirrhosis resulting in liver failure, liver cancer, or even the need for liver transplantation.

There is no vaccine to prevent hepatitis C infection, however there is a highly effective cure.



A highly effective cure for HCV has existed for over a decade, but patients still struggle to access it.



Even with insurance, **only about 1 in 3 people receives timely treatment** after diagnosis.



This effort reaches across party lines to address the HCV epidemic in U.S.

How does this benefit American patients?

This bill promotes the widespread diagnosis and treatment of HCV across the country. Successful cure of hepatitis C provides benefits that extend beyond improvements in liver health and provide comprehensive improvements to a patient's quality-of-life and overall well-being after the infection is cleared from their system.

If left untreated, however, the hepatitis C virus leads to liver damage, which can cause chronic infections, liver cancer, and transplantation. The liver is the second most needed organ for transplantation, with HCV being a leading cause of liver transplant. Screening, diagnosing, and treating HCV early on and across all populations will allow patients to catch and cure HCV before it becomes too severe. Liver disease is often "silent," making screening and awareness efforts paramount.

What does S.1941 do?

S.1941, sponsored by Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), takes strategic approach to ending HCV by expanding patient access to testing, treatment, and cure, strengthening the public health infrastructure, and reaching disproportionately affected populations through innovative care delivery models.

- Establishes a national program to eliminate hepatitis C.
- Ensures affordable access to testing, treatment, and cures.
- Reaches vulnerable groups, including people on Medicaid, in carceral facilities, receiving care from the Indian Health Service, and the uninsured.
- Strengthens public health efforts to prevent and treat hepatitis C.
- Expands the strategy to address hepatitis B – for which there is no cure yet, though early detection can save lives.

