

Date of Hearing: August 4, 2022

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON RULES

Ken Cooley, Chair

ACR 214 (Fong) – As Introduced August 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Valley Fever Awareness Month.

SUMMARY: Declares August 2022 as Valley Fever Awareness Month. Specifically, **this resolution** makes the following legislative findings:

- 1) Valley Fever (coccidioidomycosis), a progressive, multisymptom, respiratory disorder, is a debilitating disease, and is caused by the inhalation of tiny airborne fungi that live in the soil but are released into the air by soil disturbance or wind.
- 2) Valley Fever attacks the respiratory system, causing infections that can lead to symptoms that resemble a cold, influenza, or pneumonia. If left untreated or mistreated, infection can spread from the lungs into the bloodstream, causing inflammation to the skin, permanent damage to lung and bone tissue, and swelling of the membrane surrounding the brain, leading to meningitis, which can be devastating and even fatal.
- 3) Once serious symptoms of Valley Fever appear, including pneumonia and labored breathing, prompt treatment with often toxic antifungal drugs must be given, which is especially disagreeable for patients who require the drugs to be injected beneath the base of their skulls for meningitis and which can cause side effects, including nausea, fever, and kidney damage.
- 4) Within California alone, Valley Fever is found in portions of the Sacramento Valley, all of the San Joaquin Valley, desert regions, and portions of southern California. However, California does not have an official statewide method of tracking the rate of Valley Fever infections.
- 5) According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Valley Fever infection rates rose twelvefold nationwide from 1995 to 2009, and researchers estimate that the fungus infects more than 150,000 people each year who either suffer serious ailments without knowing the cause of their illness or escape detection of the disease.
- 6) According to the CDC, between 1999 and 2011, the rate of infection of Valley Fever in California rose more than 600 percent, from 939 cases in 1999 to 5,697 cases in 2011, before declining to 2,243 cases in 2014, but increasing again to 7,546 cases in 2018.
- 7) Although the rate of Valley Fever infection in California declined between 2011 and 2014, it increased annually between 2014 and 2018, infecting Californians at eight times the rate of infection in 1999.
- 8) Dry conditions and lack of precipitation present urgent problems regarding Valley Fever. Valley Fever is usually found in soil two to eight inches from the surface, and the extreme dry conditions caused by drought increase the chances of coccidioidomycosis airborne fungi exposure.

- 9) Valley Fever is a disease that has been studied for the past 100 years but still remains impossible to control and difficult to treat. There is no known cure for Valley Fever, but researchers are closer than ever to finding a much-needed vaccine against this devastating disease.

FISCAL EFFECT: None

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

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