

**As Introduced**

**128th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2009-2010**

**H. C. R. No. 30**

**Representative Yates**

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**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

To urge the Congress of the United States to end the 1  
longstanding ban on federal funding for syringe 2  
exchange programs. 3

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE  
OF OHIO (THE SENATE CONCURRING):**

WHEREAS, The Harm Reduction Coalition, a national advocacy 4  
organization that promotes the health and dignity of individuals 5  
and communities impacted by drug use, reports that 8,000 people 6  
are newly infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and 7  
another 15,000 are newly infected with hepatitis C through sharing 8  
syringes and contaminated medical equipment every year; and 9

WHEREAS, One of the most important strategies in reducing the 10  
transmission of HIV and other blood-borne infections, according to 11  
the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is ensuring 12  
that injection drug users who cannot or will not stop injecting 13  
drugs have access to sterile syringes; and 14

WHEREAS, Syringe exchange programs (SEPs) are community-based 15  
initiatives that permit injection drug users to exchange used 16  
syringes for clean, sterile ones, with the purpose of reducing the 17  
transmission of blood-borne pathogens and promoting the safe 18  
disposal of used syringes as infectious waste; and 19

WHEREAS, Government officials and agencies have acknowledged 20

the effectiveness of SEPs for some time. Former Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala reported to Congress in February 1997 that a review of scientific evidence showed that SEPs can be an effective component of a comprehensive strategy to prevent HIV and other blood-borne diseases in communities that choose to include them. The CDC in 2005 acknowledged that SEPs have been shown to be an effective way to link some hard-to-reach injection drug users with important public health services, including substance abuse and mental health treatment and treatment for tuberculosis and sexually transmitted diseases; and

WHEREAS, SEPs are highly cost-effective: the lifetime cost of medical care for each new HIV infection is \$385,200, while the equivalent amount of money spent on SEPs would prevent at least thirty new HIV infections, according to the Harm Reduction Coalition; and

WHEREAS, SEPs have been endorsed by several scientific and medical organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the American College of Preventive Medicine, the American Nurses Association, and the American Psychological Association; and

WHEREAS, Despite the success of SEPs in preventing new HIV and other blood-borne infections, their cost-effectiveness, and their endorsement by health care providers, Congress has banned the use of federal funds for SEPs since 1988, forcing many SEPs to survive on dwindling private donations and state and local funds; and

WHEREAS, An appropriations bill for the United States Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies passed by the United States House of Representatives in July 2009--H.R. 3293 of the 111th Congress (First Session)--moved to finally lift

the ban since the bill did not contain provisions barring SEPs 53  
from receiving federal funds; now therefore be it 54

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 128th General Assembly 55  
of the State of Ohio, hereby urge all members of the Congress of 56  
the United States to support an end to the longstanding ban on 57  
federal funding for SEPs by enacting legislation to that effect, 58  
either through H.R. 3293 or another appropriate legislative 59  
effort; and be it further 60

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 61  
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the 62  
President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of 63  
the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the 64  
United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the 65  
members of the Ohio Congressional delegation. 66